The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LXVI NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 1931 NUMBER 852

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The Week

AN ESTIMATED drop of more than $200,000,000 in the income-tax receipts for the first quarter of this year, coupled with the prospect of a Treasury deficit amounting to more than $700,000,000, remind us again of the surpassing wisdom of the greatest Secretary of the Treasury since Hamilton, who insistently argued that reducing tax rates on large incomes would increase the yield to the government and would maintain prosperity. The repeated income-tax reductions made incontinently by the Coolidge administration while prosperity was still with us, in spite of the warnings of competent economists (Dr. Ernest Minor Patterson of Pennsylvania wrote a special supplement on the question for The New Republic), left Mr. Hoover with an unfortunate legacy. We had no large surplus to cushion the drop into depression, and taxes will have to be increased at the very time when the resistance to increase will be the most heartfelt. Republican spokesmen are saying that the increase will not be made by the next session of Congress. That would be suicidal just before a presidential election. Nevertheless, it must be made some time, and the chief fault is the Republicans'. Furthermore, in order to stave off the increase as long as possible, Mr. Hoover will certainly adopt a policy of false "economy" which will oppose governmental appropriations for all sorts of highly necessary objects—as indeed he has done this winter. How long will the country stand the strain imposed by the practice of the theory that if we take care of the rich taxpayer and fail to take care of anyone else, all will be well?

THE estimate of the Census Bureau that in January there were in the United States 6,050,000 persons without jobs, able and willing to work, and looking for a chance to do so, and 300,000 laid off without pay and hence unemployed, besides those hundreds of thousands partially unemployed because on part time, will be no surprise to those who have followed the more reliable statistics carefully enough to take no stock in the statements of the official optimists. It will, however, come as a shock to those who took on faith the statement in President Hoover's message to Congress early in December, that the unemployed numbered 2,500,000—a figure based on the misleading announcement of the Census Bureau as a result of its survey of last April, and repeated countless times ever since by those who wanted to minimize the gravity of the situation. One wonders if Congress would have adjourned so gayly without providing any emergency funds for unemployment relief if the larger figure had been known.

AS A result of a tiny seasonal gain in employment and production in February, the papers have been full of statements by the optimists already so often discredited, to the effect that the depression has passed its bottom and revival has begun. Everyone will hope fervently that this is the case. Nevertheless, a number of observations are in order if one wishes to know the truth instead of being comforted by empty words. There is normally a gain in February and March over January, due wholly to seasonal influences. The rise in employment this February was small. It

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was slightly, but only slightly, greater than a computed average of the normal seasonal increase based on past experience. There is no assurance whatever that this means the end of the depression, or that the number of the employed will continue to grow. The industry whose gain is most impressive is cotton textiles, and this industry has its own ups and downs which are far from coinciding with the fortunes of business in general. Indeed, there is some ground for believing that the demand for cotton fabrics normally increases during depressions because people have to economize by wearing cheaper clothes. Nearly all indices of industrial activity are still far below the depression level of the same months of 1930. Even if revival should come, experience shows that it is likely to develop very slowly; the climb upward takes longer, as a rule, than the plunge from prosperity to depression. Those who are saying, and will continue to say, that the statistics relieve us from the necessity of considering emergency measures are without a shred of justification.

NEW YORK CITY'S affairs are to be subjected at last to a comprehensive scrutiny. While Governor Roosevelt has hesitated, presumably recognizing the presence of corruption, but reluctant to jeopardize his own presidential ambitions by breaking with Tammany, underground politics have been worked successfully in the state assembly. Both its houses have passed a resolution for an inquiry into New York City affairs by a joint committee of their own, with the ubiquitous Samuel Seabury as counsel. That New York corruption needs to be turned inside out under the ultra-violet ray, no unpartisan observer can deny; but if you look at the matter in the perspective of decades rather than years, it is hard to be enthusiastic about the probable results. A great many crooks will doubtless be dismissed, and some of them sent to jail. There is at least a good chance that Tammany may be defeated in the municipal election of 1933, not by the New York City Republican machine, just as corrupt though less efficient, but by a reform group. Thereafter the city would probably have four years of zealous inexperience at the top, plus furtive dishonesty, on a somewhat smaller scale than at present, below. But Tammany has been out of office before, and knows what to do. It would bide its time, hoping to come back in 1937, and past experience suggests that it would probably be able to do so. The real cure for New York's troubles, in so far as there is any, short of altering the whole basis of our civilization, is in taking the city administration out of politics and putting it into the hands of independent, expert executives; but hardly anybody is thinking in that direction, or along any except "turn the rascals out."

LAST year, the Lambeth conference of Anglican Bishops startled the world by giving a guarded endorsement of birth control. Now the Federal Council of Churches of Christ, the most important organization of the evangelical churches in the United States, has taken similar action. By a vote of three to one, its Committee on Marriage and the Home has approved of the "careful and restrained" practice—whatever that means—of birth control by married people. If this pronouncement had preceded the Lambeth conference, it would have caused a sensation; coming when it does, it provokes hardly more than a ripple of interest. The birth-control battle is about over; the churches are merely recognizing a revolution which has already taken place. The Archbishop of Canterbury summed it up when he observed that the birth rate in western Europe and America has fallen about 50 percent in one generation, through the general spread of birth-control knowledge and the use of contraceptives. Every church in the long run accepts the social practices of its own time, though there is usually a lag between social innovation and priestly endorsement.

WHEN the Federal Farm Board was set up, The New Republic pointed out that its stabilization plan was inadequate to the emergency and would fail. Using government money to buy and hold surplus crops might succeed if the surplus were temporary and due to extraordinary weather or other conditions not likely soon to be repeated; but this was not the case in the United States. With persistent overproduction in relation to the capacity of world markets to absorb our exports, any attempt by the Farm Board to hold up prices by large purchases would leave the government holding the bag. It might in addition, so long as the effort to keep prices up was temporarily successful, make the situation worse by encouraging production. This prediction has now been fulfilled. The Farm Board, now approaching the end of the funds allotted to it for stabilization, has been forced to announce that it will not buy any of the new crop. What it has already bought is hanging over the market. Wheat prices have fallen to the lowest level since 1895. If emergency relief is to be had, more drastic measures must be employed; a permanent policy demands a planned agriculture and the control of production —something which cannot be achieved by hastily improvised coöperative marketing agencies.

MOTION-PICTURE newsreels are a form of journalism, as we were saying the other day, and this is especially true since the coming of the talkies, which can interview any prominent person and let his own lips betray him. We are interested, therefore, to learn of a new project for a chain of movie houses in all parts of the United States. They will number perhaps 5,000 eventually, and will show nothing but newsreels. The first of these "Trans-lux" theatres was opened in New York a fortnight ago and others are to follow in quick succession. By a series of mechanical inventions, the

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cost of operation of these houses is greatly reduced. No doormen or ushers are employed: you enter by a turnstile, find your seat unaided (the auditorium is always lighted) and leave by a special exit. The lighted auditorium is possible because the projection machine is behind the screen, a few feet away from it, an arrangement which is also said to do away with all flicker, eye strain and distortion, so that one seat in the house is as good as another. The admission to these theatres will be twenty-five cents or less, depending on the rental value of the space. The management promises that there will be no censorship of any film offered for exhibition, on the ground that it is "controversial" or "radical"; if it's interesting and genuine, it will be shown. Here is an enterprise which may prove of much value to the communities it serves.

Is Roosevelt a Hero?

GOVERNOR Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York is now under two spotlights, glaring from different quarters of the American amphitheatre. One projects on his features a warm and rosy radiance which flatters him in the eyes of those who want a hero to struggle for them against the villains of the political piece; the other paints him such a sickly green that those who see the side it strikes watch him with cool distaste. He is the great enigma of American national politics.

On the pleasant side, he is seen as the progressive successor to Alfred E. Smith, without Mr. Smith's handicap of religion, accent and dripping Wetness. He has fought a good fight on St. Lawrence power, and seems to be on the point of winning his cause. In general, he is for more effective control of the utilities in the interest of the public. He occupies an advanced position on labor legislation and relief of unemployment; he has the rudiments of a good agricultural policy, and favors planning for land utilization and conservation. These qualities endear him to Democrats who do not like the Raskob influence, who are hostile to Owen D. Young as a prospective candidate too close to the big corporations, the financiers and the power interests, and who do not want the party to become merely a good little brother of the Republican. They make him the one hope of independent progressives who take the renomination of Hoover for granted.

The unflattering light comes from his relationship to New York City politics. The "new Tammany" is revealed as an unregenerate version of the old; every day adds to the reek of its corrupt operations, as they are gradually uncovered by attack and investigation. Venal and incompetent magistrates, extortion and cruelty practised by sections of the police even upon innocent women victimized by false charges of vice, alliance with gangs and criminals, murders apparently to stop the mouths of dangerous witnesses, failure to detect and prosecute the culprits—these are rising to the proportions of a national scandal. Meanwhile Mr. Roosevelt is all too obviously relying on the support of this same political machine to advance his presidential aspirations.

It is true that Al Smith came up through Tammany, whereas Franklin D. Roosevelt began his political career at some distance from it. Nevertheless, Smith grew beyond it and away from it; as Governor he never allowed the machine to have much scope in state politics and he looked with disfavor on its operations in the city. In consequence, when he ran for President, he was punished by being given such a small majority in the metropolis that he lost his own state. But, in the same election, Mr. Roosevelt was given such sturdy Tammany support that, when added to the following which responded to his own popularity, it carried the city and the state by a thumping majority. Again in 1930 the Tammany organization rolled up for him an unprecedented metropolitan vote, which was hailed by the bosses as a reply to the charges which were already being made against their machine.

At every step in uncovering the New York scandals Mr. Roosevelt's hand has had to be forced; he has gone slowly and placed strict limitations on the investigators; he has done as little as he decently could—many believe he has done less than decency demanded. He has acted shrewdly in taking every move at the time when Tammany could see that nothing less could be done. It is true that in his conduct of his office he has not been the mere tool of the New York Democratic organization. But it is also true that he has been less independent of it than was Governor Smith, and that he has taken care not to cause it such discomfiture that it would cease the campaign to gather delegates for him in 1932.

From the very beginning of the reform agitation in the city, appeals have gone to Mr. Roosevelt to break definitely with Tammany, to come out boldly as its enemy, to play the part of a Tilden or a Cleveland. These appeals have usually been accompanied by the argument that the bold course was also the wise political course, that nothing else could so endear him to the party in the rest of the country and to the voters generally. He was warned that playing with the city bosses, however carefully he might do it, would endanger his nomination and election. But there are serious doubts whether this course really would have been good politics. His record in relation to New York City may indeed kill his opportunity; but a break with Tammany might easily have killed it also. The next President must, in all probability, carry New York State, and the chance that any Democratic nominee could do so without the support of the local Democratic organization is about one in ten.

The enigma of Roosevelt is in part a matter of his personality and character. The truth appears more clearly if we look at him without the spot-

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lights of those who want to admire him and of those who dislike and distrust him. He is indeed a liberal-minded man, of excellent intentions. He believes in the progressive measures which he has espoused. He is not tied to any hard-shelled set of prejudices or any sinister economic interest. His record on social issues undoubtedly makes him a more desirable presidential candidate than any other who is now prominent. Nevertheless, he is not a man of great intellectual force or supreme moral stamina. There is no doubt that he wants very much to be President, and like ninety-nine out of a hundred men who want to be President, he is willing to play with forces which can help substantially to nominate and elect him. He is not impelled to look closely into the nature of these forces. His caution in dealing with the situation in the city is partly due to the fact that he never has realized how bad the situation is; he has never wanted to realize it. It is his misfortune that the perennial crusade against local corruption should have coincided with his climb toward the presidency. He is not a hero, and he is not a villain.

The enigma is also partly the result of the unreasonable and unrealistic attitude of Americans toward politics. We hope that every President will be a great and heroic figure, ready to fight every sinister and powerful interest at the drop of a hat; we forget that such men cannot possibly become President under existing political institutions except by some rare and lucky chance. The nearest approaches to the hero we have had in the White House in recent years have been accidents. Roosevelt achieved his first prominence with the aid of political bosses; displaying characteristics believed untrustworthy by them, he was side-tracked in the vice presidency, and became chief executive because the safe man was assassinated. Wilson was made Governor of New Jersey by a machine which had such poor judgment that it expected him to be stupid in politics and tractable; he was nominated for the presidency by an unpredictable interplay of forces and was elected for his first term as a minority candidate because of the birth of a third party. Political affairs are controlled by groups of interests organized for their own benefit; as long as the best organized groups are composed of those who are out to protect and enhance their profits, and those who are in the business of exploiting corruption in cities and states, we are not justified in expecting that the established parties will regularly bring forth great and wise men to lead us. Hoping for heroes as presidential candidates of the Republican and Democratic parties is hoping for miracles. If we want candidates who will not be complaisant toward any of the existing aggregations of power, we must cease looking to the heavens to provide mythical heroes to save us. We must work in the mundane reality of social forces in order to organize power which is capable of producing the sort of candidates and of electing the sort of Presidents we want.

"Lawrence Can Take Care of Herself"

LAWRENCE, MASSACHUSETTS, has for decades been the scene of strikes against low wages, long hours, intolerable conditions, lack of union organization. The leaders of these strikes have on various occasions been of widely different shades of political and economic belief. Some have been associated with the conservative American Federation of Labor, some have been ministers with social vision, some have been I. W. W. members; those in the strike just ended happened to be Communists. All alike have been attacked by means of police violence, illegal arrest and other forms of governmental oppression. Lawrence does not care what weapons are used against labor leaders, nor does she discriminate among them, so long as they retain a vestige of influence. And Lawrence remains, through the decades, a city of poverty and exploitation, of a leaderless and unorganized mass of mill workers.

The recent strike began on Friday, February 20, in the combing rooms of the Washington mill of the American Woolen Company. Efficiency men, attempting to assign nine combs to two workers in place of three to one, met with bitter resistance. A walkout followed, which by Saturday had spread spontaneously to other departments of the mill. On that day a parade of 3,000 striking workers swarmed down the city streets to the Wood mill. The leaders, vaulting the gates, persuaded the workers there to join their ranks. By Monday, February 23, a total of 9,600 were on strike from three mills. And, in other New England units of the American Woolen Company, the strike spirit was spreading. In the near-by Pacific Mills as well, workers threatening to strike forced the management to throw out all "efficiency men." The badly exploited Pilot Radio Company employees joined in the struggle, eventually winning wage increases.

Demands formulated by the strikers included: (1) removal of all efficiency men; (2) abolition of the "speed-up"; (3) time and a half for overtime; (4) no discrimination against strikers; (5) recognition of mill and department committees of the National Textile Workers' Union; (6) adjustment of workers' grievances through these committees.

The militancy of the strikers, coupled with the receipt of important orders for woolens from the General Motors Corporation, led the company on Tuesday, February 24, to seek an early settlement in this, their most important manufacturing center. In the negotiations, which began the next day, they offered to accept all conditions except the granting of time and a half for overtime and the specific recognition of the union, although both parties were satisfied to have mill and department committees

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in full operation. A deadlock ensued on the question of overtime. The employers next demanded that the workers vote whether or not they wished to return under the terms offered.

At this stage, Father James A. MacDonald of St. Mary's Church entered the dispute. On the previous Sunday he had thundered against the strike leaders, terming Edith Berkman, one of their number, "a red flame with a hellish tongue, coming as a breeze straight from Russia." His influence in a strongly Catholic center cannot be overestimated. Forming a "Citizens' Committee" with the assistance of the managing editor of one of the local newspapers, he proposed to establish harmony by eliminating the pernicious radicals who had sown seeds of discontent among his parishioners. He was joined by the president of the local Chamber of Commerce, the Industrial Secretary of the Y. M. C. A., the mayor, and a number of local business men, bankers and clergymen.

On Thursday morning, the mayor, acting for the Committee, sought admittance to union headquarters. He was kept waiting while the strike leaders discussed the question of balloting. A controversy ensued, during which Patrick Devine, an official of the union, was seized and jailed. The indignant strike leaders countered by calling off negotiations until Devine should be released. Thereupon, the police staged a second raid, breaking down the doors and clubbing the assembled committee. Edith Berkman, William Murdock and most of the strike committee were arrested, two being so badly beaten as to require stitches. At the station, threats of being blacklisted and driven out of town effectively intimidated the less seasoned members. Here Father MacDonald appeared in the role of protector of the misguided Lawrence residents among the leaders, bailing them out at $50 each. Berkman, Devine and Murdock fared worse. They were held on charges of "conspiracy to injure personal property," "conspiracy to injure real property," "conspiracy to intimidate" and "conspiracy to interfere with contracts." Originally their bail was set at $5,000 each, but when their friends had collected enough to obtain the release of two of the prisoners, the bail was raised to ten, fifteen, then twenty thousand dollars, by making out new warrants on additional charges, each one with separate bail. When the required sum was finally procured, double security was demanded. Late Thursday night, when the critical stage had been safely passed, Berkman and Devine were released under a total bond of $86,000.

In the confusion resulting from the disruption of the strike leadership, a vote was held by the Citizens' Committee on the employers' proposal. The official count showed that 2,000 out of the 10,000 voted, and that of these, 1,600 favored returning to work. The mills were opened and the strike declared off.

Meanwhile, on Friday morning, the hearing of the leaders took place. The case was held for the grand jury, and the three were released on the same bail. Their exit, however, was blocked by United States immigration officials, who forcibly detained them until warrants could be telegraphed from Washington. The same afternoon they were arrested and taken to Boston, where they were held incommunicado to await hearings for deportation, on the charge of being aliens with anarchistic beliefs. For three days the prisoners were not even allowed to put up bail—"there were certain technicalities which had to be adjusted with Washington." At the hearing on Monday, March 2, bail of $5,000 was finally fixed.

Commissioner of Immigration Mrs. Anna C. M. Tillinghast, of Boston, stated in a telephone conversation that she had received an urgent call from the mayor, police, and Citizens' Committee pleading that Lawrence was threatened with riot and bloodshed if these radicals were not eliminated from the situation. Mrs. Tillinghast was asked: "Could you arrest me on the street and hold me incommunicado until I proved my citizenship?" Her prompt reply was: "This only applies to radical strike agitators!"

The remaining union leaders were seized on Monday, March 2, in a second raid by the police on the office. Records were confiscated, and the leaders arrested on a charge of vagrancy. One, a girl, was shipped out of town with orders not to return.

The Lawrence Sunday Sun of March 1 passed judgment on the week's events in a vigorous front-page editorial under the heading, "Lawrence Can Take Care of Herself":

> Lawrence demonstrated, during the past week, that she is capable of taking care of herself. While the experience was nerve testing, there was no manifestation of hysteria, no signs of hasty activity, but a grim determination was shown to go about the business of settling this internal difference in a most effective manner. . . .
>
> Never before in the history of the country has there been such an outpouring of civic pride. It is an enviable commentary upon the city that it terminated a condition, which some predicted would be a reign of terror, in such a speedy, emphatic and satisfactory way. . . .
>
> Lawrence is to be congratulated.

Is she?

A New Austro-German Entente

EVER SINCE the War, Europe has talked about the possibility of an "Anschluss," a political merger between Austria and Germany. The argument in favor of such a development is obvious: the settlement of 1919 left Austria as a head without a body, an economic monstrosity; and while this situation would not be wholly cured, it would certainly be much ameliorated if she became part of the German Reich. Racially and lingually,

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her people are closely tied to the Germans. It is not surprising that the proposal has gained many warm adherents in both countries.

The chief opposition to it has come from without, and most of all from France. The French, who carry their famous clarity of vision to the point of a pessimistic neurosis, oppose any and every suggestion which might strengthen Germany in territory, population or wealth, and thus make her a more dangerous opponent in that Next War, anticipation of which is the continuing mainspring of French policy. They have exacted from Austria explicit promises, in treaty form, that she will remain an independent entity, and have taken all possible measures to see that these promises are kept.

In recent years, much has been heard about a Pan-European Union or United States of Europe; and M. Briand, on behalf of his country, has been active in putting these suggestions forward. Although it might seem that a customs union, with universal free trade within its boundaries, is the very heart of such a proposal, the French have shown no enthusiasm for this aspect of the matter. They have argued that political questions must be solved first, and that economic problems will thereupon melt away. It seems evident, however, that their real purpose has been the one already stated: to keep Germany economically as weak as possible, to prevent anything like a restoration of the balance of power in Europe, to maintain to the utmost extent their own dominating position. When a "tariff truce," which would be at least the beginning of such a customs union, was recently suggested at Geneva, the project died because of sabotage by France and her satellite powers.

No sooner had the failure of this attempt become apparent than Germany and Austria announced, with dramatic suddenness, a coup of their own. They propose to inaugurate the customs union without waiting for anybody else, though they warmly invite every other power to join them, now or in the future. While no agreement has yet been signed—in any case the ratification of both national parliaments is necessary—they intend a complete abolition of tariffs (with unimportant and temporary exceptions) as between the two countries. Their legal experts argue that this is no violation of the treaties either of them may have with other countries requiring tariff treatment as good as that of "the most favored nation"; since by long precedent the customs union, creating complete free trade, is considered a special case.

Such a union between Germany and Austria alone is not, of course, of much economic significance, since both these states are at present on an industrial basis, with exportable surpluses of machine products. To make the agreement important, they must add the agricultural countries of eastern Europe, perhaps ultimately including Russia. If this were done, the economic grouping thus achieved might in fact become a menace to France's political hegemony achieved through the Little Entente; and if such a development seemed likely, the French would be well advised to enter the union themselves and seek to neutralize Germany's possible ambitions from within, rather than to stand aloof.

All this, however, is far in the future; and for the present, the announcement of the Austro-German plan has created the greatest excitement in Europe, where some commentators describe it as the most important development of the past decade. The French look upon it with deep distrust, believing it may be only the prelude to that political union of the two countries which they have been at such pains to forbid. Czechoslovakia follows France, as was to be expected. Italy believes that her own economic life may be thrown out of balance. In an international atmosphere so strained as that of Europe has been in recent months, proposals which are innocent in themselves may have the most serious consequences. At the same time, France is inhibited from taking any violent action to register her displeasure, since this might cause the present German government to fall, in which case it would probably be succeeded by one much more in sympathy with Hitlerism, more hostile to France.

The Germans have in fact achieved a brilliant piece of diplomatic strategy. The creation of free trade with Austria is in line with all the best economic thinking of recent years. It is impossible to maintain that it is a prelude to political union unless you assume that the German and Austrian governments are both lying. By initiating their proposal and inviting all other nations to join them, they have advanced the idea of the United States of Europe at one stroke ten times as far as M. Briand's vague oratory has done. They have also put the French in a position where their true purposes are embarrassingly revealed. In diplomacy it is dangerous to advance too far at a single step; and this is the chief criticism which can be made of the Austro-German plan. On every ground of common sense it is admirable; but European politics is not ruled by common sense, and is unlikely to be for a long time to come.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1931, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK CITY. BRUCE BLIVEN, PRESIDENT. DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER.

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RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR.

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The Second Year of the Drought

ON SUNDAY, March 8, 1931, The Philadelphia Public Ledger gave a front-page, two-column spread to the news that rain was falling in the lower Mississippi and Ohio Valleys. It was not a heavy rain, only a moderate one, and not nearly so large as was needed. But the rain was news because it was an unusual occurrence.

I spent the last days of February in northern Virginia, a drought section. It was the time of year when under ordinary conditions the streams babble and gurgle and roar with excess water; when the dirt roads are ankle deep or worse with mud and automobiles sink to their hubs in the deeper ruts; when the oozy fields are dotted with little pools of water shining in the sun, and the farmers wonder in how many weeks the ground will be dry enough to be ploughed. It is the beginning of what is usually that sloppy season when, during the Civil War, armies were helplessly stuck fast in their camps by a terrain which made it impossible for them to move. "Why doesn't the army move?" was a familiar cry in the North, and the definite and complete answer was "Mud!"

In the last days of February, 1931, an army would have found no difficulty in going anywhere in northern Virginia. The fields were dry. The dirt roads were level, smooth and hard. In some places wagonloads of milk cans showed that the farmers were hauling water for their families and their animals. They were also hauling water and digging new wells in central Maryland. Wells were going dry in southern New Jersey. A short time before, farmers in Missouri were hauling water, and in Arkansas the land had been too dry even to plough. It is appalling to contemplate, but the drought of 1930 is still with us. Over a wide area, normal rainfall has not yet been resumed. Mr. Kincer, agricultural meteorologist of the Weather Bureau at Washington, reports that much or all of the winter has been the driest on record for Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota; Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Missouri; New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia and Kentucky. This dry winter follows a summer and autumn that were also the driest on record. It is cumulative, a fact which makes the drought doubly dangerous.

Let me describe the section of northern Virginia where I was born, where I spend most of my summers (including that of 1930), and where I have a farm in a neighborhood of bona-fide dirt farmers. The drought of April, May and June ruined the hay and killed the young clover which was the chief dependence for the 1931 hay crop. July's drought reduced the corn to a small fraction of a crop. By August the pastures were in many cases completely exhausted. Whole pasture fields looked as lifeless as an old weather-beaten straw stack, and farmers began winter feeding. Oak trees and apple trees in forest and orchard where the soil was shallow, began to die. In September the continuing drought prevented the planting of barley, or destroyed what was planted on faith. In the fall some wheat was planted in hope of autumn rains, but there is no prospect of a good crop.

The rainfall station nearest to the northern-Virginia section reports that 1930 showed a deficiency of 23.06 inches of rainfall. That is but 47 percent of normal. The first two months of this year showed only 49.6 percent of normal. During the last eleven months only two rains of more than an inch have fallen over a wide district, and one of them fell at Christmas on frozen ground, so that almost none of it permeated the soil. As a result, bankruptcy, government loans and Red Cross activities are conspicuous elements of the life of that county this spring, as they are in a thousand other counties.

I have a spring on my farm. It supplies the house and has served our wants for twenty-two summers. It has been giving a thousand or two thousand gallons of water a day during the driest months, and we considered it perennial. It went completely dry in November and was not running a drop the last day of February.

Two classes of dangers face the farmers of many states for the season of 1931—the hangover dangers and the future dangers.

First, the hangover dangers—deficiency of ground water and shortage of working capital. Water moves through the earth very slowly. Therefore surprising quantities of it are ordinarily in the ground beneath every farm. This ground water, replenished largely by winter rains, is a very important source of moisture for the summer crops in the Eastern and Southeastern United States. Even the short-lived wheat plants have roots six or seven feet long, and the insignificant looking blue grass of the pasture field and the lawn sends roots down at least two feet. Ground water feeds springs and wells and it also rises by capillarity to the point where plants can reach it. Therefore, the drought of last year threatens to hit the farmer again because the summer crops are dependent on the winter rain, which did not fall abundantly this year. Last year's drought has already hit him in many ways, crippling any chance for progress this year. His hay field is without grass. His wheat is in bad order. His haymows are emptier than ever before at this time of the year, his flocks and herds are reduced. His mortgages are bigger. His notes at the bank are more pressing; his credit is lower,

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to say nothing of low prices caused by the slump.

The future dangers have two forms. First, will the drought continue as it is now? And second, if rains increase, can they suffice to bring crops? Mr. Kincer, agricultural meteorologist, says that the Middle West needs twelve inches of rain in the next two months to restore things to normal. The average precipitation, which has not been falling for fourteen months, is less than two-thirds of this twelve inches. My neighbor, who bought a thousand apple trees, will not plant them for fear the summer will kill them. He will put them instead where he can water them for a year. He knows that normal summer rain usually falls on land well supplied with ground water from winter rains. Thousands share with me the fear that even normal rain will leave crops below the average. If average amounts of rainfall should be kind enough to distribute themselves perfectly through the growing season, we shall come through in fair order. But rains are independent and still absent.

No wonder that man prays for rain. I do not refer to the Zuni Indians in the deserts of Arizona or the tribes on the edges of the Sahara. I refer to the people of New Jersey, Virginia, Dakota. They pray for rain, too; they pray in groups and in public places. It is all they can do, for was it not said truly, long ago, that "the wind bloweth where it listeth"? The rain is not only beyond our control, it is as yet beyond our understanding.

Why did it not rain? We can probably say with truth that deforestation has reduced by a small amount the rainfall of the Ohio Valley; that it has increased by an enormous amount the speed of run-off and the destructiveness of floods; that it has been a great factor in the continuing erosion of fields which has already destroyed in our country an area of good farm land equal to that under cultivation in Japan. But we cannot say that deforestation or erosion made any substantial part of the great drought of 1930-31. The meteorologists say, gravely, that something has disturbed the general circulation of the earth's atmosphere so far as it applies to the Southeast.

Those who read that interesting sheet, the daily weather map, know that ordinarily the United States has a constant procession of weather units moving across it. An area of high barometric pressure carrying with it clear, rainless air, is followed by an area of low barometric pressure bringing clouds and rain. The surface winds blow into the low area from all directions. They rise, drop their moisture and go outward at high levels. The weather man calls this a cyclone. It covers a hundred thousand square miles or so, and should not be confused with the tornado, which is a fierce twister that destroys in a path less than a mile in width. The cyclone brings us our all-day rains. These cyclonic areas of rain move across the country, and are the chief rain makers of America. Think of one as being central on the coast of South Carolina. The winds that blew into it from the eastward would be ocean winds blowing on to the land. If this area moves up the coast, as such areas commonly do, ocean winds will blow from the sea to the land. They will come by the hundred thousand cubic miles and will deluge the land with rain and snow. Such is the record of nearly all the historic blizzards of the Eastern United States. But suppose the high area with its dry air happens to occupy a couple of hundred thousand square miles, including the seacoast area, and that the cyclone starts at Arkansas and runs to Buffalo. It draws dry air from the high area. It cannot get the makings of a good rain. Therefore, though it goes through the motions of making a rain, it produces only cloudy weather and a few brief showers.

The weather of 1930 and of 1931 to the present time has been a perfectly marvelous succession of highs that held to seashore locations, hung there a long time, and kept the lows from getting water. I have scanned the daily weather maps for the whole of the past twelve months. I have done this for a quarter of a century. It has been amazing to see how, recently, a high area would occupy the Southeastern United States whenever a low area tried to bring rain. The lows have traveled up the Atlantic coast, but have drifted out to sea far enough to bring only clouds or sprinkles to the land. They have crossed the Northern states, from Dakota to Maine, by the dozen. They have started at Georgia, but have moved out to sea rather than up the coast. Meanwhile, the high with its drought hung over the land an amazing proportion of time each month. It still does. We have no reason to hope to be able to change this, but if we knew when such disturbances of the routine were coming, many things could be done to mitigate the calamity.

How ardently I wish that the funds used to build and operate a single battleship for its allotted time could be devoted to a systematic study of the atmosphere so that we might find out what causes the major weather changes. This meteorological study would be a world-wide enterprise, with stations on Antarctic ice, the Greenland ice cap, Tibet, the Pamirs, western China and many other odd corners. Airplanes and balloons would explore the upper air, and the magnetic and other activities of the sun and planets would come in for close scrutiny.

Though the scientific world may sometimes confess itself baffled, yet it still has faith—a faith based on the conviction that no fundamentally new cause has suddenly begun to work in this universe. But that the present drought is unusual and unprecedented every scientist will admit, for no drought of similar proportions or duration has ever occurred in this country since the white man first settled it. There is, however, some little comfort to be found in the realization that many former droughts have been followed by a long period of heavy rains and that when the present drought has ended, there is every probability that a comparable one will not again occur for many years.

J. Russell Smith.

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The American Theatre: 1930-31

Is the Whole Show on the Skids?

The Exhibit on the Table

AS I WRITE in December, 1930, the mechanism of the theatre is at the height of its seasonal activity. Impulses radiate in all directions from New York, the central switchboard, from the bright lights of a Broadway already metaphorical like Valhalla. The theatres are open and swept and heated, the ballyhoo of the public-relations counsels is in full swing in skysigns, ads, columns in Sunday papers. At openings every other night everybody who is anybody airs his dress suit, his new wife, her new lover, affinity, social connection, concubine, friends, diamonds, Paris gowns; the critics stand round in the lobby looking wise between the acts and then dash for their offices, where they tap out their stories, desperately in a hurry to make the deadline, to go out and have a drink, to go home, harried, too, by the fear of getting in wrong, of betting on the wrong horse, of muffing a wisecrack or losing the proper note of imported London Smoke Shop doggishness, or, worst of all, of lowering their average in Variety's scoreboard of right guesses. On the stage, in their dressing rooms, the actors are worried for fear the show won't be a hit, for fear somebody else will get a better write-up; they've rehearsed four weeks without pay, they owe money for their clothes and their board bills, they can't forget the crowds "at liberty" cooling their heels in Chamberlain Brown's outer office, or the seedy men and women looking for jobs on Sixth Avenue or the breadlines out in the shrill wind. In their offices the managers worry about real estate, loans, leases, the Street, the scarcity of sugar daddies and angels (no need to say that money's tight this year), the high cost of production; hope against hope for the ring on the phone from that Hollywood that's fast becoming a metaphor too like Broadway and Valhalla, for a long-distance phone call that will mean a slice in a talking-picture contract and will pull things through. Even the electricians, stage hands and musicians, for years secure in their tight conservative unions, are uneasy this year. Working under this peculiar madhouse pressure, it's a wonder that the standard of production is as high as it is.

The audience is under similar pressure. The dress suits and the low necks in the orchestra are full of money worries; they've hurried to the theatre from dinner and have got to hurry off afterwards to be seen at a night club or party, the theatre is somewhere to sit a couple of hours between social engagements, and then they can't admit they've missed the season's hits. The balcony is calmer, but there's the worry about the five or six dollars you can't afford and had to shell out to take yourself and your girl to this show everybody's talking about. No wonder the underlying myth of all the plays is the "If I had a million dollars" or "If I was rich and famous and loved a beautiful actress" fantasy.

What's the entertainment offered to fulfill these fantasies? First and most antiquely reputable, there's the opera, a tradition lingering from the old-time snobocracy of the nineties, an institution like Thanksgiving dinners, that people keep up without knowing exactly why, but that still affords pleasure to a considerable population (largely foreign, Ham Fish take notice) genuinely fond of old-fashioned European music. Then there's the Theatre Guild, the creation of the rich German-Jewish intellectuals, an extraordinary well run organization that specializes in warmed-over European productions, an interesting phenomenon because it expresses so exactly the mentality of the liberal educated wing of medium business and its wives and families. At the moment of writing they are producing a five-years-too-late copy of the Meyerhold Theatre's production of "Roar China" and a play called "Elizabeth the Queen" that is the vehicle for two excellent and much loved actors and is cashing in on the popularity of Lytton Strachey's book. In Boston and Baltimore, they have, an unusual thing for them, two plays by unarrived young Americans now being groomed for Broadway. Then there is Eva Le Gallienne's Civic Repertory Theatre, attracting a similar but less wealthy public, presenting, and very adequately indeed, a series of European classics: plays that people have read about in library books or heard discussed in lectures on the drama. These two are the only American theatres that have any tradition or permanent organization, the only two theatres that really exist in the German or Russian sense of the word theatre.

Then we have "The Green Pastures" and "Lysistrata," two "artistic" successes much praised by the critics, that seem, to me at least, devoid of interest from any point of view (there are some well staged scenes in "The Green Pastures"), except that the "Lysistrata" production proves, like many Shakespeare revivals, that you can't keep a good play down; a few well acted comedies and farces like "Strictly Dishonorable"; the perennial crook melodramas, a form that seems unfortunately to be decaying; an immensely successful copy of a production of Reinhardt's "Grand Hotel"; a couple of sexy offerings whose main function seems to be to keep Bishop Manning in a rage; an immense amount of genuine talent for dancing, clowning,

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acrobatics, costuming and popular music exhibited in the great string of musical shows and vaudeville acts that seem to me, now that we have gotten too sophisticated for good crook melodrama, the only entertainments that show genuine originality, verve and feeling for American life.

One exception among serious plays was "The Last Mile," an excellent example of the furthest the American theatre has been able to go in the direction of native spontaneous drama really dealing with something that means something to somebody. It was a play about the revolt in the death house of a prison, based partly on a terribly impressive article a man condemned to death sent to The American Mercury. Chester Erskine's direction and the acting and setting had all the technical perfection that is our theatre's chief asset, but the play, although written in the simple moving language that men and women really speak, that American writers are at last able to handle deftly and without self-consciousness, lost the genuine powers of tragedy through the lack of any intellectual or social driving force that could give shape to the very painful and real emotion aroused. The fact that it had a considerable run is interesting, too; perhaps that proves the stirring of a faint uneasy conscience over the stupid brutality of our prisons and our judges and our police. "The Last Mile" is the type of play, honest, sincerely written, but essentially untheatrical, that crops up season after season in New York. I think the reason that we never move on from there is that these plays are more notable for the matter presented than for real theatre imagination. The realistic style of production, so perfected by Belasco, and now by Jed Harris, emphasizes the matter entirely; so that, *as theatre,* there has been no advance in twenty years.

The Last Twenty Years on Broadway

The strangest thing about the history of the last twenty years in the theatre is that it hardly helps you at all to understand this season of 1930-31, or any other season. There's been virtually no tradition built up in these years. Like many other American institutions, the New York theatre is an idiot child; it has no memory.

The wave of social self-consciousness and indignation of the early nineteen hundreds that came out in politics as progressivism, reform, the Non-Partisan League or a vote for Debs, hit the theatre a little later via Greenwich Village radicalism. At that time Shaw and Ibsen were the Ultima Thule and the average cultured person's idea of the top-notch of theatrical achievement was Sothern and Marlowe in "As You Like It" or the Ben Greet Players. The Greenwich Village radicals got the idea that the theatre ought to be mysterious, sophisticated and socially expressive, that poetry on the stage might as well be two bums talking over a camp fire as a lot of ham actors in fancy dress mouthing "Prithee my noble lord." They'd read Synge and seen the Irish Players. Out of this feeling came the Washington Square Players, the Provincetown Players and the nation-wide little-theatre movement. Amateur theatricals, like oratory, had always been popular in small towns, and now Main Street was going theatrical with the Main Street revolters in the lead in Provincetown and down on Washington Square. It was Main Street on the rampage that led the revolt against Broadway.

The Provincetown Players did "The Emperor Jones" and "The Hairy Ape," hatched out by Eugene O'Neill, and offered a laboratory for our only scenic artist, Robert Edmond Jones; the Washington Square Players trained a lot of good actors and rose to glory and wealth as the Theatre Guild. The little theatres produced Paul Green and the whole series of folky plays that were the result of trying to reproduce Synge in various American dialects. It began to look, as I imagine it may have looked in the old days of "The Prince of Parthia" and of "Fashion," and as it certainly looked when Clyde Fitch and William Vaughn Moody began to write, as if the American theatre was going to come to life and stand on its own feet. Well, that came about, but not quite as its well wishers had expected. What happened was that Broadway switched from being the poor relation of the Strand and the Haymarket to being the rich uncle of the whole European stage.

Meanwhile, one part of Main Street's social revolt was won. The late-Victorian prudery that had throned everywhere in the early years of the century was definitely put on the run. It became possible to use swear words, bare legs and genuine situations out of life on the stage in a way that would have given people apoplexy six or seven years before. Mrs. Grundy wasn't completely exterminated, worse luck, in fact she's raising her head again right now; but she was so much weakened by the encounter that a whole generation has been able to grow up virtually free from her clutches. The good old days when a man could get sexually excited at the sight of a woman's ankle and a girl would faint if handed a pair of suspenders have gone never to return.

The political reaction coincident with our entrance into the European War broke up the old type of middle-class Main Street radicalism, as it weakened the whole trade-union movement and crushed the I. W. W., but it filled Manhattan with European ideas. Instead of a national market, the city became an international market for the drama as for everything else. Reinhardt and Stanislavsky became the influences instead of Shaw and the Abbey Theatre. Already Joseph Urban had introduced German methods in the short-lived Boston Opera company. Visits of the Diaghilev Ballet, the Moscow Art Theatre, Nemirovitch-Dantchenko's Musical Studio, gave producers and critics entirely new ideas as to what the last word in theatre

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art was. Cosmopolitan Ritz became everybody's ideal. American jazz, the Ziegfeld show, the New York type of revue, became the dominant expression in the world of the millionaire fantasy. There'd been nothing like it since the Medici and the hanging gardens of Babylon.

All the Main Streets went abroad and took to drinking and looking arty at the Dome and lost interest in their home towns. The Theatre Guild put up a building that vies with Roxy's for expensiveness and bad taste and dedicated itself to warming over Middle-European productions, and what's more to its credit, to the plays of O'Neill, now launched and internationally known as the chief American dramatist. The Provincetown Players petered out and died, having lost the battle ground of social revolt that it had gotten its blood from in the old Greenwich Village days. The little theatres and community playhouses all over the country that started out to encourage home production now do nineteenth-century classics and stale Broadway successes. One of the best of them, the Lewisohn sisters' Neighborhood Playhouse, has closed up its doors. In other words, President Harding's normalcy was reëstablished all down the line.

One attempt to buck the tide and put on plays dealing with the industrial life around us in a novel experimental manner, the New Playwrights' Theatre, found no support in the kind of interest and enthusiasm that had kept the Provincetown Players going in the early days, and failed after two seasons. Still I think it may eventually be remembered as a crude forerunner of a new type of theatre. Certainly in Paul Sifton and Em Jo Basshe it introduced two playwrights of first-rate ability. At the same time Eva Le Gallienne's Civic Repertory Theatre, starting under very much the same conditions, but looking backwards instead of forwards and offering a commodity for which a market existed, succeeded notably and is now an established and valuable institution.

At the present writing Broadway is again dominant as it was twenty years ago. The theatre is a commercial speculation, very closely connected with the talking pictures, for which it seems to be becoming a kind of laboratory. O'Neill's plays, John Howard Lawson's "Processional," the plays of quite a bunch of young men of whom Paul Green and Sidney Howard are typical, have, except in the offices of Broadway managers and the minds of the critics, established for American playwriting an intellectual level certainly higher than that of Augustus Thomas and the beloved and ingenious Georgy Cohan. But what happens is that the good American plays after a season or so disappear into the void. There is no National Theatre to keep them going, no provincial repertory theatres, as in Germany and Russia, to keep enough past work on the boards to establish a tradition. After a year or two, it's as if they hadn't been written at all. The stage is a hothouse where the plants are forced, amid much burning of shirts and dancing in the streets by the little coteries who represent its intellectual atmosphere, to produce a few expensive blooms that have to be new new new (that is, in the ads; actual novelty is more dreaded than a grand jury), and then they're thrown out to rot.

What We Have to Work With

It's no use talking about the possibilities of the American theatre as a mass art for the future without first getting down the assets and liabilities.

Opera's out for one thing.

On the "legitimate" stage our main asset is, I think, also one of our chief liabilities. That is the extraordinary technical slickness attained and demanded. The finish of productions like "Broadway," "The Front Page," "The Last Mile," is an admirable thing in itself, but it makes growth very difficult. As in every other department of American life, technical proficiency has in some curious way inhibited real human meaning and growth. In the theatre particularly the attitude of the critics and managers and the American love for a smooth-running mechanism make experiment almost impossible. It's so much easier to do the same thing over and over again.

Then there's the difficulty that only a very small section of the public has any really solid interest or love for the theatre. There is none of the feeling of solidarity with it you find in France and Germany and Russia. We don't feel that the theatre belongs to the people like a public library. We still have the provincial feeling that it is something imported from abroad.

The worst obstacle to change and growth is the impossible disorganization of the theatre itself. Year after year the New York stage is run like a Florida real-estate boom. Except for Eva Le Gallienne's company and the Guild, and the offices of a few managers like Winthrop Ames or Arthur Hopkins, the whole thing is a fly-by-night speculation just on the edge of being a confidence game. Serious work is impossible under such conditions. An actor's or director's or scenic artist's career has no permanency or dignity. In Europe, where the stage is a profession, the organization of permanent repertory companies gives some assurance of a steady livelihood and a chance for long periods of constructive work. Here, nobody can think ahead of one production; it's all a hand-to-mouth business. Small wonder that the American stage is more of a racket than an art.

Things being as they are, it's extraordinary that American actors as a whole are competent and hard working, and certainly compare favorably in seriousness and honesty of purpose with other members of artistic professions. In fact, since the stars and matinée idols that poisoned the American theatre of before the War have been drawn off into the wider world of the pictures, the stage presents a body of actors that are material for any kind of a theatre.

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The real American theatre art lies in musical comedy, revues, vaudeville, night-club entertainment. Here there's outlet for the technical skill, the machinery of feeling, expression for the million-dollar fantasies that jazz and pretty girls and dancing liberate in the blood of office workers and business men. The bedrock musical show is the old-time burlesque with its simple sexual ritual, its type comedians with their smut and wisecracks and its release from the restraints of home, church and prudery, and the satirical wisdom it shares with most real popular art. But it's a long way from the Old Howard or the Minsky Brothers to Flo Ziegfeld's ritzy glorifications of the American Girl, and along that gamut every racy native note is struck. It's a cheap art and shallow, where all that glitters is gold, that makes up with humor and horseplay for intellectual deficiencies. But maybe at this stage ours is a cheap and shallow civilization.

Every theatre has at any given moment a basic myth that lives in the subconscious fantasies of the audience. In Russia it's the myth of the leader killed and the revolutionary mass sweeping on. In America it's a girl and boy love song under the cheesecloth apple blossoms, and the boy's just made a million dollars, and they achieve Success, that mystic tabloid crown that hovers over the bright lights and skysigns of Manhattan. When the American mass myth changes (perhaps this year will change it for a good many if they don't starve to death in the process), I think it's much more likely to find expression on Tin Pan Alley and in the syncopating feet of a musical-comedy chorus than in the lugubrious world of drama leaguers, Pulitzer Prize Committees and students of Professor Baker's courses.

What Do We Want?

Well, we want a theatre that will be a social force, something like the Abbey Theatre or the Theatre of the Revolution in Moscow, some permanent reputable organization to put on plays which would express the side of the American mass myth that the musical comedies leave out, that would express it as vividly and directly as the musical comedies do and have as much entertainment value, too, as much stimulation and release by music, color, movement, laughter, a lump in the throat. The musical comedies are the theatre of prosperity. Let's have a theatre of depression, a theatre that perhaps would be able to mold the audience a little instead of everlastingly flattering it. This is an epoch of sudden and dangerous transition. Industrial life is turning a corner and is either going to make the curve or smash up in the ditch. If a new order is to be built in the shell of the old, every possible means must be used to formulate, explain, justify. In a world of collectives, the theatre, which has always been a mass art, is one of the most simple and obvious organs of contact between the mass and the individual member of the crowd. It's proving that in Russia. Granting all the differences of race and education, it could hold the same position in America.

What Have We Got?

First, we've got Broadway, and second, whatever instruction we can pick up from the defects of the various attempts to revolt against it.

The thing is that in ideas the theatre is still in the age of gas lamps and horses and buggies; it's only where there is the least intellectual content, in musical shows and vaudeville, that it's geared to the present at all. In that it shares the plight of the whole college-educated middle class from which its workers mainly come. The result is that inability to cope with the modern world is in self-defense considered a virtue by the managers, critics and hangers-on who give the theatre its line of talk. Remember the shock, the feeling of being thrown back twenty-five years, when you heard the first talkies. The application of theatrical dialogue to an up-to-the-minute medium like the moving pictures created a comic discrepancy that everybody noticed until they got used to it and accepted it as a convention. That jolt is a measure of the incompetence of the mental level of the stage. Why, even as a business it's unsuccessful and antiquated. Even the Shuberts, who are probably the gentlemen who have made the most money in the whole history of the show business, confine their business ability to real estate and agency transactions. The Theatre Guild is probably the only theatre organization in America that has reached the standard of efficiency of any ordinary commercial business; so it flourishes like a green bay tree.

What results is that the theatre exists commercially mostly as a pretext for various more or less shady rackets, and that it is fast becoming a subsidiary of the talking-picture industry. The big money's all in the pictures. Many plays are produced on Broadway merely to give the glamor of the bright lights and the intellectual prestige (God help us) of Broadway names to the later talking-picture production. In the ensuing hocus pocus a flock of agents, play doctors and managers get cuts, at the expense of the author, in the price for which the play is sold. Where the greenbacks grow there will the heart be also. A large section of the heart of Broadway is already in Hollywood.

I don't suppose there's much point in prophecies, but it certainly looks as if the stage were being eaten up by the pictures. The best we can hope for it, I think, is that it will continue as a laboratory and try-out place for the talkies. To do that a complete revolution in theatrical technique will be necessary, because it's obvious to everybody that theatre conventions don't go on the screen. What television will do you can hardly guess.

There's one other hopeful possibility; a severe tightening of the financial crisis might wreck Broadway and knock all its grandees higher than kites.

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Then, if groups existed which had the nerve and the energy to try to create a new theatre, they'd have the technical equipment on hand cheap, they'd have the actors wanting work, the stage hands and electricians, the dramatists, the scenic artists. All they would need would be the force and the line of talk necessary to attract, move and mold an audience. Through the theatre socially constructive ideas could reach the wider field of the talkies. By socially creative ideas I don't mean little bedtime readings from Marx and Engels; I mean the new myth that's got to be created to replace the imperialist prosperity myth if the machinery of American life is ever to be gotten under social control. If the theatre isn't a transformer for the deep high-tension currents of history, it's deader than cock-fighting.

JOHN DOS PASSOS.

The United States and India

A Footnote to Recent History

IN THE proposed settlement between Great Britain and India, one of the departments which the former most earnestly seeks to reserve to itself is that of foreign affairs. This is an aspect of the Indian question which is a manifest exception to the British contention that the whole matter is one merely of domestic concern, in which the rest of the world is not properly interested. It would be easy to show how British foreign policy for the last two hundred years has been directed in the main by the exigencies of empire in India—to the disturbance of the world peace and to the detriment of the relations of Great Britain with Russia, Germany, France, Turkey, Egypt and Persia. That the representation and control of the Indian people in their relations with foreign nations by Great Britain are not without interest to the United States, any more than in the case of the Irish, is suggested by certain facts which are set forth in what must be largely a personal narrative. Some of the facts which follow I stated at the time to Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe, as an influential English Liberal, then in America with the object of promoting good relations between the two countries. They return to my mind when I read of the surprise of British journals at the lack of sympathy which American public opinion shows toward their effort to sustain the White Man's Burden in India.

In the winter of 1919 a report came to The Dial, of which I was then editor, that a young Indian named Sailendra Nath Ghose was detained in the Tombs, charged with writing to the President a letter on Indian affairs by which act he "unlawfully, willfully, knowingly and feloniously" acted as agent of a foreign government "without prior notification to the Secretary of State of the United States." His bail for this monstrous offense was fixed at $10,000, and he had been in jail for several months. Judge Learned Hand called up the case and reduced the bail to $1,000, which was speedily obtained, and Ghose was released. In answer to Judge Hand's query as to why excessive bail was demanded, the representative of the district attorney's office explained that they feared Ghose intended to marry an American girl. That there were other influences at work was evident, and subsequent events seemed to throw light upon them.

Shortly after this my attention was called by Mr. Gilbert E. Roe to a bill pending in Congress, one clause of which provided for the deportation of certain Indians serving sentence in Leavenworth for conspiracy to ship arms to India. I called on several Senators, among them Senator Colt, acting chairman of the Committee on Immigration and in direct charge of the bill, and Senator Medill McCormick, who without exception recognized the joker and promised that the bill should not pass in its original form. At the same time a committee, of which I was chairman, issued a leaflet to the public, pointing out that the deportation of these men would mean death or imprisonment in the Andaman Islands. In answer there appeared a letter in The New York Times from a Columbia professor, deploring such insinuations against the British government of India. I replied with a letter citing from official documents a number of recent cases in which Indians, decoyed or kidnapped from foreign countries, had been summarily shot. Of course The Times did not print my rejoinder. I sent a copy, however, to the Columbia professor and received through a friend a courteous expression of regret that my letter had not been published. It was also reported to me that this same professor explained that he had no personal knowledge of the matter, but had written his letter at the instigation of the British Ambassador.

A little later the Indians imprisoned in Leavenworth, after serving terms of one to two years, began to appear. They were of very different stations in life; some were those whom we used to call intellectuals, among them Taraknath Das, an American citizen and student at the University of Wisconsin; others were workers and leaders of labor. They were all, however, interested in the revolutionary movement in India. Most of them were arrested in April, 1917, immediately after the United States entered the War, for a crime alleged to have been committed in 1914-15. Some of them had been

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in this country at that time and continuously since. Others stated they were not in the country in 1915.

The attempt to ship arms to a German vessel somewhere in the Pacific is one of the romances of the War. The American vessel cleared in due order from San Diego for Hilo, but failed to connect with the German, and accordingly put back to the coast, where the cargo was sold. The trial is one of the most disgraceful episodes in our judicial history. In the indictment were named fifty-six Indians, thirteen Americans, twenty-six Germans, including Theodore Helferich, German Minister of Foreign Affairs, and one Chinese. It was conducted by the United States district attorney under the direction of George Denham, chief of the Criminal Investigation Department of the government of India. Mr. Das told me that when the American police came to search his apartment and arrest him, George Denham was with them. He and four assistants, two British and two Indian, were active in the courtroom throughout the trial. When the district attorney sent to his office for some papers, Denham went along to identify them. The San Francisco Chronicle estimated that 200 members of the British Secret Service had been in San Francisco for more than two years, working on Indian cases, at an expense that easily runs into millions for salaries alone. The evidence of conspiracy was provided by a group of Indians especially imported under military guard. The convicted men whom I interviewed stated that they had never seen one of these witnesses before they appeared in the courtroom. One of them, Jodh Singh, refused to testify, and was refused protection by the court. The Indians believed that he was tortured (no one knowing the vogue of the third degree in our police methods will find this story incredible), and was then (1920) in an insane asylum in California. On the last day of the trial Ram Singh, one of the defendants, shot another, by name Ram Chandar, who had acted as agent for recruiting Indian coolies as stokers. Mr. Das informed me that in his address to the jury the district attorney leaned heavily on patriotic duty to our Allies, etc. At all events, he was given a banquet by the British Empire Society in New York, in recognition of his services.

In addition to the San Francisco case many others were reported of British interference with our courts. Mr. Gilbert E. Roe, who generously defended the Indians, told me that the British Consul in New York had requested a court stenographer to furnish him with copies of the evidence in cases in which Indians were involved. The British Consul in San Francisco offered to furnish the United States authorities with additional information to deport Indians in case the information he had already supplied was not sufficient. A British secret-service man named Nathan was active in proceedings against Indians in New York in 1918. He was allowed a quasi-judicial status in questioning Americans who sympathized with these alien refugees. He was present with officers of the Military Intelligence Department when P. N. Sinha was before them, charged with trading with the enemy because he had warned his countrymen in Mexico of their danger of arrest. When at Sinha's trial Nathan's presence was challenged, the American head of the local bureau admitted that he had brought him in as "an expert on Indian names." A terrible, and certainly in part verifiable, account of the treatment of Indians and their American sympathizers by the American police and military authorities under British instigation is given in Miss Agnes Smedley's novel "Daughter of Earth." A friend who was employed in the Military Intelligence Department has told me that he was directed to make an exhaustive investigation into the Doukhobors and to report to the British liaison officer, who lightly dismissed the evidence of their loyalty with the remark: "We know all about the Doukhobors, but we suspect some of them are mixed up with the Indians."

No one will defend the subserviency and sycophancy of American officials in these cases. We know that those in power during the War often acted shamefully, using espionage to plunder and persecute their own fellow citizens. But that agents of a foreign power, even under the specious cloak of an alliance which did not exist, should play upon the stupidity, prejudice and corruption of our courts, should stimulate the ferocity of our police and soldiers-behind-the-lines, should smuggle legislation into our statutes for purposes of their own, is intolerable among "free nations." We do not believe that British men would act thus except when Indians are involved, just as we refuse to believe that Ramsay MacDonald and Lord Irwin would sanction the savagery, evidence of which Senator Blaine has read into The Congressional Record, except in the case of Indians. We do not know whether India is fit to govern itself; we know that Great Britain, at least, is not fit to govern it, and that her attempt to do so is a source of danger and corruption to herself and other peoples.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Anacreontic

Peace! there is peace at last.
Deep in the Tuscan shade,
Swathed in the Grecian past,
Old Landor's bones are laid.

How many years have fled!
But o'er the sunken clay
Of the auguster dead
The centuries delay.

Come, write good verses then!
That still from age to age
The eyes of able men
May settle on our page.

YVOR WINTERS.

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Who Might Make a New Party?

The Third Article in Dr. Dewey's Series

DISCONTENT with the two old parties does not of itself compel the formation of a new one. The realization that both are alike because both are servants of big business is a step toward the creation of a new alignment of political forces. However, it is a step which does not necessarily lead to organized action. For, one might ask, why cannot and should not a new alignment grow out of or within one of the old parties? This question is asked by those who are thoroughly dissatisfied with the old parties as they stand; who want to see radical changes in their conduct; who believe, to state it briefly, in new purposes, new policies and new methods in politics.

The question deserves an answer. On the one hand, it implies the possibility and the desirability of boring from within by methods which will eventually produce a complete face-about and reorganization. And on the other hand, it implies the organization of independent progressive voters so that they will hold the balance of power and be able to throw their weight in every election on the side of candidates who stand for progressive measures. One or the other of these tactics is usually urged by persons having a practical experience with politics, a practical experience which the present writer lacks. Moreover, they consider any other strategy utopian and doomed to failure.

Let us take, for example, a Democrat in one of the Northeastern states, in New York or Massachusetts. He will point to the progressive leaders in his party and to the great measure of popular response they evoke. Why not, he will ask, utilize the liberal leaders and elements in the Democratic party as the basis for new methods and goals? Though he will admit that the present difference between express policies of the two parties is slight, he will go on to point out that, historically and temperamentally, the Democratic party is the party of the common people, of the industrial laborers and the relatively poor, and that its tradition commits it to opposition to the privileged, and to support of the masses, in distinction from the "aristocratic affiliations" of the Republican party. On the other hand, if we take a Republican from the Middle West, we will get an opposite reaction. He will point to the insurgency within the Republican party of the West; to the fact that historically the Republican party originated in support of liberty. In brief, he will invoke Lincoln, as the Eastern Democrat invokes the Jeffersonian tradition. Furthermore, he will point out that the Democratic party in the East is the party of Tammany Hall and of corrupt city machines; that the Southern wing is the very stronghold of conservatism, and that its historical conservatism is reinforced at present by an industrial development. And anyway, he will conclude, the Northern and Southern wings of the Democratic party have nothing in common save the desire for party victory. But to all these accusations the Eastern progressive Democrat will reply: And what is there in common between the Eastern reactionary and the Western insurgent wing of the Republican party, and which wing dictates national policies and candidates?

To my mind, the two sets of statements are facts which completely neutralize each other. Taken in conjunction they give the answer to the question: Why not bore from within and reform one of the old parties? I speak as one who as far back as 1912 hoped for a resurrection of the Republican party, as one who has at times in national elections hoped for a revival within the Democratic party. But at last I am disillusioned; I am humiliated at the recollection of the length of time it has taken me to pass to something like political maturity. For, I submit, it is an infantile cherishing of illusions, a withdrawal from the realities of economic and political facts, to pin one's hopes and put one's trust on the possibilities of organic change in either of the old major parties.

Winning the balance of power is a scheme which has its attraction for some. To my mind, its attractiveness is sentimental, although it is presented in the guise of superior practicality. The labor required to weld independents into a group effective in action is as great as that required for creating a new party. The idea of bringing it to pass is even more utopian. It may prove effective here and there, in scattered localities, but not on any national scale. It can lead only to guerilla warfare; with the occasional support of a progressive candidate or measure. But it contains within itself no promise of continuous and systematic effort; it contains within itself no promise of steady *direction* of political action. And directed action is the one great lack and need in American public life.

At present there are insurgents in Congress belonging to both parties. If there were anything solid in the idea of influencing political policies in a constructive way through the use of a balance of power, these men would long ago have gathered together, agreed upon positive measures and appealed to voters, irrespective of party, to support these

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measures. They have done nothing of the sort.[1] Search where you will and you will find no more conclusive proof of the impracticability of the idea of an independent balance of power. I will venture the prediction that the next Congress, which will afford an unparalleled opportunity for the manifestation of this balance of power, will be marked by confusion, uncertainty, recrimination and deadlocks.

Finally, if there is anything in either of these two ideas or in both of them combined, the creation of a new party is the surest and readiest way of putting into effective force whatever elements of strength they may possess. If we are to have government by blocs, or if we are to have a revival of progressivism within either of the old parties, definite action in behalf of constructive policies will depend upon the creation of an aggressive third party, which, even if it remains a minority opposition, will justify itself by the pressure it will exert upon the action of the old parties. It alone can force their hands and compel some manifestation of positive leadership within them.

Then there are the Socialist and Communist parties. Why should not political discontent and unrest express itself through them? Not much need be said about joining the Communists. As a party, they are directly governed from Moscow, and foreign control is simply out of the question for any party in the United States that means to be a going concern. And, aside from the fact that the Communist party does not speak the American idiom or think in terms relevant to the American situation, it is identified with a fanatical and doctrinaire inflexibility.

The Socialist party, on the other hand, has lost much of its alien atmosphere—once mainly German as the Communist is Russian. It has freed itself to a large extent from doctrinaire dogmas, though internal division within the party on this score has still to be taken into account. Let me anticipate my later discussion by saying that I think a new party will have to adopt many measures which are now labeled socialistic—measures which are discounted and condemned because of that tag. But while support for such measures in the concrete, when they are adapted to actual situations, will win support from American people, I cannot imagine the American people supporting them on the ground of Socialism, or any other sweeping ism, laid down in advance. The greatest handicap from which special measures favored by the Socialists suffer is that they are advanced by the Socialist party as Socialism. The prejudice against the name may be a regrettable prejudice, but its influence is so powerful that it is much more reasonable to imagine all but the most dogmatic Socialists joining a new party than to imagine any considerable part of the American people going over to them.

Sentiment is more than sentiment; it is a force. I recognize that there is a large amount of routine attachment to parties from mere force of custom, a kind of hereditary Republican and Democratic affiliation, and that there is also an emotional attachment. But very large numbers have already been weaned, and engage in at least sporadic manifestations of independence. The immediate problem in tactics is to consolidate this element and to expand its size. It is the natural nucleus of a new party. Aside from the gradual weaning process which has now been going on for a long time, and which was accelerated by giving women the suffrage, an emergency like the present gives an immense jolt to great numbers, a jolt which shakes them loose from old ties. Now is the psychological time for launching a new political party devoted to well defined and new political issues.

Since it is the failure of the old parties to deal with the realities of our economic life which is the source of the present discontent, the appeal and the strategy of a new movement must be founded on these realities. I do not mean that they should try merely to utilize immediate economic self-interest; in spite of any temporary adherence such a movement might gain, I doubt its permanent success. It would be likely to go to pieces as soon as conditions change. There has been the appeal to idealism in the initiation of every significant American political movement, as well as to direct self-interest. The plight of the liberals in recent years has been caused largely by the absence of any defined social philosophy which would give direction to this latent idealism. I do not see how you can get a popular social idea and ideal merely by funding the discontents of economic distress. These afford an opportunity, but not an aim.

For these reasons, the first appeal of a new party must be to what is called the middle class: to professional people, including, of course, teachers, the average retail merchant, the fairly well-to-do householder, the struggling white-collar worker, including his feminine counterpart, and the farmer—even the farmer who has not as yet reached the ragged edge of despair. In spite of the disparaging tone in which "bourgeois" is spoken, this is a bourgeois country; and an American appeal couched in the language which the American people understand must start from this fact. Equality of opportunity is still an American ideal. The middle class is now concerned as to whether it will be able to maintain this ideal for itself, and it believes in a realization of the ideal for those less fortunately situated. A new political movement should aim to protect and render secure the standard of living enjoyed by the middle class and to extend the advantages of this standard, in both its cultural and economic aspects, to those who do not enjoy it. This should be attended with whatever leveling down of the idle, lux-

[1] This was written before the call for the recent progressive conference. How far the conference will affect the truth of the statements made is a matter of the future. My guess is not far, unless it marks the beginning of a new party.

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urious and predatory group such a goal necessitates.

I have argued that neglect of the consumer and his standard of living at the expense of fostering production is the ultimate cause of much of our present distress. This middle portion of the community represents most adequately the interests of the consumer. Moreover, in spite of what is said by theorists about the rigid division of classes and the necessary class conflict, this class is still fairly fluid. It reaches in both directions. It is the repository of sympathy for the under-dog. It is possible to mobilize this feeling in effective ways, and the attempt to do so is in line with whatever remains of the characteristically American tradition. This sentiment was the backbone of the Progressive movement of 1912 and of the La Follette insurgency of 1924. It cannot be argued that the abortiveness of those movements proves the futility of depending upon the middle class to form the backbone of a new political movement. The causes of their failure are extraneous to the point. It is true that the chief obstacle to a development of an organized liberal party in this country has been the hope and ambition of members of this class—and indeed of the laboring class—to rise to the higher capitalistic level. But aside from rude frustration of this expectant desire, it is this class which is most amenable to direct social appeal in the general social interest.

Although I have included the farmer who is not completely bankrupt, because of failure of banks and crops, in this middle class, it is true that the farmers occupy a peculiarly important position at present. In the North and West they have almost systematically voted the Republican ticket, in spite of the domination of that party by the interests of finance, manufacturing and transportation. This cleavage of interests is apparent enough to produce the insurgency of Western Republicans. It remains to drive home to the farmer the depth and width of this cleft. Take one example: the tariff. The farmer is beginning to realize that the price of most of what he has for sale is fixed in a world market uninfluenced by our domestic tariff, while the prices of what he buys and consumes are greatly controlled by a tariff which merely puts money into the pockets of the manufacturer. Farmers as a class have always been sensitive with respect to the politics of money, and the control of credit, and to the way in which their interests are affected by railway rates. In respect to all three things, tariff, transportation and finance, the farmers' interest coincides with the general social interest. Awaken them to this fact, and a new political party is on the way.

I hope that the fact that I have not so far mentioned the industrial wage earner will not be taken as a sign that I do not consider him and his interests of fundamental importance. No movement can ultimately succeed that has not enlisted the hearty support of labor. But in initiating the movement, we should not be misled by a supposed analogy with British conditions. There are three factors in the growth of the British Labor party which do not exist here. The racial homogeneity of Great Britain is lacking here; the new party in Great Britain had the aggressive support of organized trade unions. The American Federation of Labor is officially more than lukewarm to political action. And the British Labor party had an organized coöperative movement of producers and consumers to rely upon. There is no corresponding body in this country. It is not, then, because I happen to belong to the middle class that I have emphasized the need for appealing to it as of initial importance.

Appeal must be simultaneously made to labor. There are enough lines of approach and methods of contact. There are the yellow-dog contracts, the abuse of the injunction power by courts; there is unemployment, the general absence of stability and security and the failure of both old parties to do anything except make a few temporary concessions in times of a critical emergency; there are old-age pensions and guaranteed adequate aid in times of illness and incapacitation; there is the whole question of inequity in the distribution of national income. Running through all of these is the fundamental question of obtaining and maintaining a reasonable standard of living, including the present underconsumption of cultural as well as of material goods. The appeals are numerous and the causes they embody are so urgent as to be heart-rending.

The elements of the population which are the potential constituents of a new party are numerous enough to justify the enterprise of launching one. The needs of these elements and their troubles call aloud for political action. The difficulty and doubt do not lie on that side. They concern the energy, the willingness for sacrifice and power of coöperation on the part of those who have vision and sympathy.

JOHN DEWEY.

Château à Vendre

The old château is pink and gray:
The rich façade is painted plaster.
There the Americans have installed
Copper heat and all
The conveniences of modern cold
And bathtubs where dolphins' mouths
Spout water with an antique finish.
They've also had to fortify the walls.

Winter includes the parc
A wilderness of indistinguishable twigs
And alleys leading
To a leaden nebula, from which
The trees emerge distinctly French.

The sun looks toward England
With the old, blind, civilized smile
Of Madame du Deffand
On Horace Walpole.

JOHN PEALE BISHOP.

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The Urgency of an Agency

IN THE NEW YORK TIMES of March 3 there appeared a full-page advertisement of the advertising firm of Erwin, Wasey and Company, setting forth their qualifications as an agency. It was called "Written After Hours," and the gist of it was that the copy writers, the layout men and the idea men of Erwin, Wasey and Company do not cease their labors when five o'clock comes: not at all, they are quite apt to wake up in the dead of night with the creative urge full upon them.

This is undoubtedly true. Certainly it is true of a great many advertising writers and artists that one comes in contact with—they feel strongly the romance of their calling and they are restless with the urgency of the creative life. Some of them are apologetic about the commercialization of their art, but those are not your true ad men.

No better picture of the fairyland in which they dwell can be found than this advertisement called "Written After Hours," done by an ad man about an ad firm. It begins with a description of twilight in the agency's office, and then gets down to business:

> Across the areaway a man bends over his desk, writing. A green visor shades his eyes. From his window, as he glances up from time to time, he can look down on the avenue twenty-eight floors below and see the home-bound traffic crawling northward and the red and yellow electric signs winking in the purple dusk. It is after hours, but he works on. He will whip his copy into finished form before he leaves his desk. His inspiration is the Goodyear Tire.

To an advertising man there is nothing anticlimactic or even incongruous in the fact that the inspiration of a writer, busy in the purple dusk, whipping his words into shape, is Goodyear Tires. As one reads on, one gets deeper into the romance:

> One of the layout men has just left his drawing board and is going out to the elevators. Under his arm he carries a tissue pad. A new idea is stirring in his mind. It will be roughed out in pencil before morning comes. Six months from now you will see it in print, a finished advertisement for Maxwell House Coffee.

What figure in literary history could be invested with more glamor than is this fellow, stealing home with a tissue pad under his arm, in his mind the stirrings of an insistent life, his soul on fire with coffee grounds! His journey homeward to his suburb is a poetic adventure.

The ad continues:

> It is after hours and most of the people have gone home. But out in Bronxville and Rye, in far hotels, on a pullman car somewhere, in foreign lands, there are Erwin, Wasey and Company men thinking about other people's businesses, working for men who are all unaware such work is going on. A few hurried notes scrawled on the back of an old envelope tonight may be the key for next year's campaign on Philco. Between the acts at the theater an idea may be born for Danersk or Real Silk. Driving his car along the boulevard a man may catch an inspiration for Curtis, or Carnation, or Hoover. At home beneath the reading lamp another may dream out a name for some new product. On a ranch in New Mexico or in a shooting box in Maryland may spring a new sales thrust for Camel cigarettes.

The story, as you see, has begun to gain pace, and one begins to catch the drift of the plot. Here are the creative men, working outside of office hours, living richly and fully, wandering far—always evolving schemes for clients who suppose them to be home in bed asleep and who are often surprised at the strange beauty of their own product when they see it pictured and hear it described in terms of next year's campaign.

Much fun has been poked at advertising and at advertising people, but not much of the criticism or sarcasm has gone below the puerility of an advertising man's philosophy to the more fundamental creative impulse that stirs him. He likes to see his stuff in print, and that makes him work hard. Anyone who has ever worked in an agency knows that the words of the Erwin Wasey writer are true, that a copy writer working on a vacuum-cleaner account believes himself to be in as close touch with the Muse as a novelist. He believes himself to be creating literature, and he is apt to make as much fuss about it and display as much temperament as a poet mooning over a sonnet. He becomes as much of a prima donna as a racehorse, and even the room in which he works has to be decorated to harmonize with his moods. The absurdity of this is patent, for all advertising is propaganda, and by its very definition falls outside the realm of letters. The Erwin Wasey man, in far hotels, in pullman cars, thinking about other people's businesses, is, of course, doing just that; and that there should be a veil of literary romance thrown over the shoulders of a fellow giving birth to an idea for increasing the sale of canned milk, gives an honest citizen pause. That the dreamer, at home under his reading lamp, should pluck from the realm of pure creation a name like Post Toasties or Seald Sweet and think of it as a poet's dream, gives further pause. Yet all that is done, in the name of art, romance and genius.

It seems possible that this creative spirit in advertising men may have amusing connotations in economics. Advertising, being concerned not with producing goods, but with moving them, is one of the non-productive callings. Being non-productive, it is to industry what alcohol is to life—a stimulant. In large quantities it apparently produces an industrial intoxication, witness the lovely hangover that the country is even at this moment trying to shake off. It is amusing to ponder:

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whether the very creative impulse of the men who write and draw advertising hadn't some share in bringing about the magnificent collapse of the country in the fall of 1929. Turn artists and writers loose when the fires of creation are burning with a rich flame of trademarks and slogans, and there's no predicting the result. Three or four years ago the country was riding high; the American family, carried along by the sheer exuberance of copy writers, had boosted itself into a brand-new standard of living. Things had come to such a pass that The Saturday Evening Post didn't recognize the family as a social unit unless it was a two-car family. The era of the electric icebox had been inaugurated. Life had reached such amazing peaks of intricacy and splendor that even a child's push-mobile had to be equipped with an automatic windshield wiper in order to get across. It is fair to inquire how much of the advertising that attended and abetted this remarkable state of society was inspired by sound business principles and how much by the simple desire, of the people who write and draw, to write and draw. In other words, if advertising had been the work of dullards, instead of geniuses; if it had been turned out in the same spirit of eight-hour-a-day drudgery that characterizes shop work and office work and mill work; if the copy writers had gone home and gone to bed at night; would it have assisted in inflating the country's balloon to that point in the autumn of 1929 when it went off with such a bang?

Apparently the effect of advertising and creation is cumulative in a vigorous country full of yearning artists. The richer the country gets, the farther from the offices of Erwin, Wasey and Company wander the copy writers, the more they are to be found in shooting boxes, and hence the more Camel cigarettes get sold. The work, the brilliant work, of these men in shooting boxes, these men lying awake in pullman cars, was unquestionably one of the factors contributing to the overproduction, over-inflation and general overemphasis of everything a couple of years ago.

Just what percentage of a company's advertising appropriation is spent to satisfy the romantic fervor of the advertising man dreaming away under his lamp, or to tickle the childlike vanity of the manufacturer who sees his product looking more beautiful than he ever thought it could, is a matter for pure fanciful speculation. The thing seems to be adjusting itself naturally. Today, for every shooting box containing an advertising man devising a new sales stimulus for Camels, there is a breadline full of men who know, without being told, just how badly they want a cigarette. When the country gets straightened around, it may be advisable to have advertising taken out of the hands of geniuses and put into the hands of clods; copy writers can shut their desks at five o'clock when the day's work is done. And fellows in shooting boxes can just go ahead and shoot ducks.

E. B. White.

Washington Notes

Progressive Strategy—Planks for Platforms—Skids under Roosevelt—The Young Idea—A New Secretary

IT SEEMS clear that the progressives, small in number though they be, are going to affect very much the course of the two major parties in the coming presidential campaign. For, having deliberately rejected the third-party idea as not feasible, the progressives intend to gain prestige by coloring the platforms and tickets of the two major parties. So far as candidates are concerned, they have practically no hope of preventing Mr. Hoover's nomination, but they have considerable hope that they can prevent the Democrats from nominating Owen D. Young or anyone like him.

The platforms, however, offer them a real opportunity, and I am convinced that they will succeed in making a mark upon them. In the first place, they have, I think, shown real astuteness in ruling out prohibition as a "sham issue," though of course prohibition is hardly that. It is and will be the paramount issue, the one in which there will be the deepest personal interest among the voters and the one most sharply dividing the parties. But if the progressives had not ruled out prohibition from their discussions, they not only would have revealed a split in their own ranks, but they would have effectually prevented themselves from placing a striking emphasis upon their economic program It was a smart thing to do. It has kept the progressive group unified and made it stand out as the lone political element in the country capable of considering or expressing concrete ideas on other problems. As a result, the progressive leaders can take advantage of the absorption of the two parties in the great controversial question, and hammer hard on power, unemployment, Muscle Shoals, economic distress and farm relief. As they possess more political brains than exist in either the Republican or Democratic camps, and as they are more articulate, energetic and determined, it is inevitable that a knowledge of what they want and how to get it will enable the progressives to create a favorable sentiment.

During the recess and the next session of Congress the progressives will carry on their aggressive campaign. They have various and sundry plans and a definite idea of covering the country through the radio and the press. They are convinced that if they persist in ignoring prohibition and in hammering away at their program, by the time the national conventions meet, they will have aroused the country to a frame of mind which will force both parties to incorporate at least part of the progressive program in their platforms.

Personally, I think the progressives will succeed in doing that much. For one reason, they are conducting much the most intelligent fight they have made in a number of years; for another, conditions in the country make people generally receptive to their line of attack; and for a third, the bulk of their proposals are sound and right. The allegedly astute politicians and political publicists who have formed the habit of regarding the progressive group as effective only in the Senate, where it can hold the bal-

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ance of power, but of no consequence at all outside that body, are, I think, due for a rude awakening before long. One great asset the progressives enjoy is publicity of a kind not obtainable by either the Democrats or Republicans. They get it, first, because their leaders, like Norris, Borah and La Follette, are sufficiently outstanding figures to make almost anything they say political news, and second, because when they speak they do not deal in partisan inanities. When they strike they raise a welt.

Leaving the progressives and turning to the major parties, the interesting development in the past week is the frankness with which a good many powerful Democrats have revealed their determination to prevent Governor Roosevelt from getting too far ahead in the race for the Democratic nomination. It is generally believed that the Raskob-Shouse machine here in Washington is hostile to Roosevelt's nomination, and that this feeling also indicates the attitude of Al Smith. The real opposition, however, comes from the heavy financial contributors to Democratic campaigns, who usually keep in the background and hold no party or official position. Despite the fact that various Southern and Western Democratic leaders support Mr. Roosevelt, and notwithstanding the logic of his nomination as a twice-elected Governor of New York, the conviction of the shrewder politicians who oppose him is that he can easily be beaten. He will not, they tell me, get more than 350 votes at any time in the convention. The real control can be held by the old favorite-son device and in the end the convention will turn to Owen Young as the strongest man in sight.

That is their general idea, but I would not bet on its working out. It is still too early to say what the Democratic convention will or will not do. I agree that at present there is not sufficient impetus behind Roosevelt to ensure his nomination, and I can see how he can easily be beaten in the convention—but it is not easy for me to see how they can put Mr. Young over in face of the sentiment that will have been created on the power-trust issue by the time the conventions meet. I cannot get over the fact that the Democratic party in the House solidly, and the Democratic party in the Senate almost solidly, voted for the Muscle Shoals bill which was vetoed by Mr. Hoover. Unless I am misinformed, this bill was not approved by Mr. Young.

Perhaps they may be able to get around Young's attitude toward the power trust next year, but not without an awful howl. Perhaps it will make no difference and perhaps he can allay the opposition by expressing some of his personal views on power, which his friends so earnestly describe as being liberal, very, very liberal indeed. At any rate, the men who have been accustomed to dominate Democratic conventions are determined to nominate Mr. Young, and, unless he himself stops them, will not surrender until the last ballot is taken. If he has given any indication of a desire to stop them up to date, no one with whom I have talked knows about it.

The Republicans, on their part, are marking time and praying for a return of prosperity. When this piece appears, President Hoover will be in the middle of his trip to Porto Rico and the Virgin Islands. He left his new Secretary—Mr. Joslin—on the job, but without much to do. The Joslin appointment is an interesting one. Why Mr. Hoover thinks he wants a newspaper man in this position is hard to understand. His experience with Mr. Akerson was not so completely successful, it seems to me, as to convince anyone that a journalist possesses the requirements for a presidential secretary to a greater degree than a politician. Certainly the politicians do not think so—and neither do the journalists.

Mr. Joslin is reasonably popular among the correspondents and among his fellow members of the Gridiron Club. Politically, Mr. Joslin will not be of any help to Mr. Hoover. He knows politics as a newspaper man, not as a politician, and there is a vast difference. The appointment will not ameliorate the unfriendly feeling of the correspondents toward Mr. Hoover, but neither will it increase it. Mr. Joslin, I think, will be an improvement over Mr. Akerson and, in any event, he is better than the Everett Saunders of Mr. Coolidge or the George Christian of Mr. Harding, who were both politicians. It is a place for a politician, but for a smart one. I never heard anyone contend that either Saunders or Christian was smart. Now Slemp—but that is a different story. What fine work Slemp did for Coolidge in that job, and what fine treatment he got for doing it, too!

Washington. T. R. B.

Drama, Music, Films

"MIRACLE AT VERDUN," as produced by The Theatre Guild, is not so good as one expects it to be. The author, Hans Chlumberg, had an idea which during the first scenes sounds promising: a cemeteryful of French and German soldiers killed in the War come back to life and call the living to account. But whether the idea is not really so good as it seems, or whether the author failed to realize its possibilities, or whether the Guild did some hidden mischief to the script, the results are disappointing. Certain passages and scenes are excellent: the first nocturnal rising of the dead, the scene where two dead soldiers start to fight, then remember that the War is over and they are brothers, the breaking of the news to the English premier by his valet, the speeches at the Quai d'Orsay by the various chancellors, archbishops and ambassadors. But the action does not rise to anything in particular. One soldier goes back to his wife and finds her married again and himself unwelcome, then all visit the Quai d'Orsay, where they find the radical Belgian prime minister helpless before the capitalist powers and these latter preparing a new war. The dead soldiers are told that a monument has already been erected for them and that they can't very well expect anything more, and they are sent back in discouragement to their graves.

This is worked up with interludes of talkies on a triple screen designed like a cross, in which riots, religious ceremonies and military demonstrations are shown interspersed with the onward march of the dead soldiers. These talkies are not very successful—the three screens and the mixture of acted scenes with newsreels are somehow disagreeable and unreal. And the climax which they seem to portend never comes. Furthermore, part of the effectiveness of even such material as the actors are given has been lost in the handling. The dead soldiers, after their first

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coming to life, never seem convincing: surely the situation calls for some special illusion to mark the supernatural character of the event and to distinguish them from the other characters; but they are all too plainly simply actors like the others. Then the speeches in the Quai d'Orsay scene, satirically amusing in themselves, are allowed to drag (though the various national types are well cast); and when the dead soldiers finally appear, they are so wedged in between the groups of living people that they get no dramatic relief. Why shouldn't the council room be arranged so that the soldiers could come in downstage and to one side, so as to stand apart from the assemblage? Surely Mr. Biberman has been more careless than one expects him to be.

Still, the play is interesting enough to be worth seeing. I have a feeling that, politics being out of fashion, the political plays put on by the Guild haven't been appreciated properly by the critics: "Juarez and Maximilian," "The Apple Cart," "Roar China." I thought they were all excellent, and it was plain from the reviews that many of the critics hadn't even paid enough attention to them to know what they were all about. A part of the cold reception of "Miracle at Verdun" has arisen, I suspect, from the same cause, and it is really a good deal better than the reviews would lead you to believe. E. W.

Modern Music for the Films

For the fourth season of modern concerts, the enterprising Messrs. Copland and Sessions, who still represent the pure amateur spirit in their art, provided a new shudder for the jaded New Yorkers who came to the Broadhurst Theatre on Sunday evening, March 15. It was an unbeatable combination: ultra-modern films accompanied by specially scored *modernique* music. (Certainly, it requires a vast urban agglomeration of men, infinite wealth, corruption, congestion and disorder, not to speak of infinite curiosity, snobbery and boredom, for the experimental or amateur spirit to flourish a little and breed such a new fellowship.) The idea of program music for the films had long been alluring; and the efforts of Darius Milhaud, one of the Parisian Six, to embellish a newsreel, seemed to have a certain trivial charm. But the American "Four," Copland, Sessions, Blitztein and McPhee, were even more inconsequential, and gave forth but a pretty and sometimes plaintive music quite familiar in its exoticism. When they were not being little Stravinskys, one felt, they were being little Wagners—save for brief moments of zest or seriousness in Mr. Copland, who, like Roger Sessions, was not writing specifically for the film. Blitztein and McPhee, who were so writing, achieved no synchronization, such as one might expect, for instance, in a ballet. Their music would begin in time, then lose itself, and finally stop while the film continued in silence.

Mr. Ralph Steiner, who bent his camera upon the restless movements of surf, seaweed and modern machinery, attained a certain success. He made the rocking tides feel like machinery, and gave to machines the infinite repetitiveness of oceans, while both had inescapable suggestions, to the eye, of comic, progenitive moods. Yet, like all gifted photographers who experiment in the cinema, he seems at best a maker of "stills" rather than of continuous kinetic designs. To be an artist of the films one needs untold experiments, materials, properties and the wealth of a Ford, besides the commendable spirit of free inquiry with which Mr. Steiner set out.

In view of the aching disappointments of the evening as a whole, one is inclined to admonish Mr. Copland and his band of conspirators. They should see to it that the *esprit moderne* hatches finer eggs: either more true extravagance or more art—else the performers must be consigned again to Mrs. So-and-sc's salon, where genius may grow up under shelter. Meanwhile, to the amateur spirit itself, one fervently wishes long life, so that it may always confound the professionals when they nod over their tasks.

Matthew Josephson.

South Sea Bubble

"Tabu" is on the whole a disappointing picture. When F. W. Murnau and Robert J. Flaherty collaborated in writing a story "based on the rich legends of the Polynesian people," and when Murnau spent the last year of his life in the South Seas, patiently seeking for the landscapes and native players best adapted to his conception, we were justified in expecting something extraordinary, something immeasurably better than the mutilated version of "Moana" that was finally released from the cutting room. What we are given, instead, is another "White Shadows"—less sentimental in photography and a trifle less Westernized, but striking no deeper into the lives of the people with whom it deals.

This is not to say that "Tabu" is a wasted evening. It has many attractions: the sight of brown bodies perfectly formed, of palm trees in the wind, of a stream descending the mountainside in a series of cataracts and pools noisy with bathers, of the sea powerful among its rocks, of a whole village taking to the water and wading, paddling, swimming, floating toward the ship that bears disaster to Bora Bora in the person of a decrepit priest. There is, in the beginning of the picture, an atmosphere of stark happiness that could exist only in Polynesia; and best of all there is a native dance, censored to be sure in the cutting room, yet still so pervasive in its rhythm, in its poetry of the flesh, that the audience sways to the beat of the native drums.

But the story, that of a boy and girl in love, intrudes itself on all this simple enjoyment. The boy is the handsomest of the youths on Bora Bora, the most skilled in spearing fish, the most daring of the divers. The girl is of royal blood, and she is chosen by misfortune as the holy maiden of all the islands: henceforth her person will be tabu. The boy defies the laws of his people: he escapes with her to an island controlled by the whites, where pearls are traded for crates of champagne and tins of kerosene; but the tabu follows them as steadily as the trade winds. For all I know, the story may be true to the Island customs, but the implications it carries are those of Hollywood tragedy, quite as formalized now as those of the happy Hollywood ending. Even an audience ignorant of all things Polynesian refused to be convinced. When the story halted a moment for a feast, a dance, a bathing party, there were signs of interest everywhere; when the story usurped the picture and marched relentlessly forward, the audience yawned. M. C.

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CORRESPONDENCE

One Way Out

SIR: Since about 75 percent of this depression may be ascribed to the failure of the profits of production to be well distributed to the great mass of the people, why not devise a graduated income tax with rates in inverse proportion to the ratio of total wages to total profits?

Winona, Minn. RALPH BAERMAN.

Why Librarians Need Pensions

SIR: The function of the librarian as a civic factor is analogous to that of the teacher, and supplementary to it. But public recognition of this fact is slow, as evidenced by librarians' low salaries and the lack of pension provision in many cases.

For instance, in New York City there are at present more than seventy employees of the public libraries eligible for immediate retirement, but neither the library trustees nor the city of New York have provided a pension system for these civic workers. Moreover, the salaries of librarians have been so low that there has been no opportunity for saving money. At present, the range of salaries in the branches of the New York Public Library is from $1,200 in the lowest grade to $2,800 for the head branch librarian, who supervises a staff of from ten to twenty-five.

The greatest stumbling block in the way of getting a pension system is the need of money for service already rendered. A fund of about $2,250,000 for this purpose is needed. A pension fund as from today would require $190,000 a year, equally divided between employer and employees. But a pension scheme which does not provide for the older people who have given their lives to the service would be manifestly unfair.

The New York Public librarians are not included in the city retirement system because, while the funds of the branch systems all come from city appropriations, they are distributed by the library corporations—a situation which leaves responsibility unfixed and causes the librarians to suffer for conditions over which they have no control.

Aside from humanitarian considerations, such a condition is detrimental to service to the public. Those ready to retire, but financially unable to do so, are hindering the promotion of younger librarians, thus interfering with normal development and causing an uneconomic turnover of staff due to lack of opportunity. Such conditions also interfere with progressive service to the public, which has a right to expect proper library service.

ERNESTINE ROSE,
New York City. Branch Librarian.

From a Cuban Patriot

The following letter to Professor John Dewey is published for its intrinsic value and interest. It was written by Señor Juan Marinello, a distinguished young Cuban lawyer who is a professor in the National University. As one of the leaders of the student revolts, he was recently imprisoned for two weeks by President Machado.—THE EDITORS.

MY DEAR MR. DEWEY: . . . From 1902 until today, North American corporations have progressively cornered the agriculture and industry of Cuba. With the large estates controlled by foreign enterprise, with the great sugar mills under outside direction, an economic state has been organized within the weak and anachronistic political state, with grave consequences for our national character which it is not necessary to analyze. A mind like yours will not ignore the role played in this colonial situation by the diplomatic representative of the United States in Havana. It has not been to the interest of the North Americans to awaken the genuine ambitions of the Cubans, for they would have risen against the great estate and the trust and disturbed the usufruct from the factory. Every initiative on the part of Congress (and there have been several) which has attempted to check the economic penetration has met with the energetic objection of the Ambassador; every fiscal measure which has sought to limit the domination of sugar by North America has stumbled upon impossible obstacles. And as the vacillating political government, lacking the wherewithal for public expenditures, has sought aid in Wall Street, the loan has served to strengthen the chain forged by Wall Street itself in each province of Cuba. The financial control is impregnable, and if at any time the native masses should wish to rise against it, the Platt Amendment would say the last word.

None the less, Cuba's grave problem is far from hopeless. Cuba is a nation facing a crisis, but not overcome. After repeated failure in their rebellion against the politician and against Washington, the purer forces have remained for many years in a languid soliloquy. It has been necessary for the political ill which is most typically Spanish-American—an ignorant despotism—to scourge us cruelly, in order to stir us to an energetic attack upon our evils. In no country on the continent of America has there appeared a movement animated by such a desire for national dignity. The university student, punished by Machado with exile and death, is primarily responsible for the state of deep moral revolution which we are now experiencing. Far from vulgar noise-making, the student has taken upon himself a work of great social and political significance. In his program he asks, together with change in educational administration, for the most profound transformation of public life; not alone for the establishment of a university of energetic social action, but also for the fall of a regime which, attacking every legitimate interest, hands over to Washington, in exchange for a "bill of perpetuity," all our productive resources.

The strong appeal to the university students has aroused all the youth of Cuba. The women and children have faced the great problem with equal integrity. The faculty of the University, those of the institutes and the normal schools, have identified themselves with the student rebellion. Cuba beholds a real resurrection; envisages life as a real republic. The answer of the government of Machado to such a surprising resurgence of spirit has been the definite closing of the University, the expulsion from their chairs of all the professors, the jailing of workers, teachers and intellectuals, the suppression of the most important newspapers, and the decreeing of martial law.

You can readily understand how Cuba's younger generation and all the young men who are aligned with the students must regard the United States. In the urgent need of settling accounts, your country has recourse to the most detestable methods. To the same degree that the action of Mr. González and Mr. Guggenheim is detestable, so also is every Cuban petition to the Senate of the United States, requesting its decisive power in behalf of justice in Cuba. Every service from foreign hands is paid for by the loss of domestic autonomy, and that autonomy is what we wish to win at any price. We condemn Washington, as do you, for supporting with the threat of its army and the power of its purse, the illegal and stupid government of Machado; but we repudiate also any North American help to the Cuban who is working to overthrow the dictator. . . .

At this point you may ask: If this is the truth, if, as Professor Wilford Garner has confessed in a recent study, "public sentiment throughout Latin America is very nearly unanimous in condemning our policy of intervention," what service can you render our Island? . . . Help us with your great voice against the sordid aims of your government, in order that we may be worth something in our own right, and attain our destiny, "to sweat out our fever alone" in the words of José Marti.

Please believe that neither Cuban bitterness nor rancor against North America has inspired this letter. Machado, who removed me from my university chair to clothe me with the jacket of the vulgar criminal and tag my neck with a number, is a symptom, not the determining cause of our prostration. We must lift ourselves above personal insult to seek permanent remedies, once for all, for the crude aggressions possible only in societies of the colonial type. United, by the anguish of this moment, to men like myself, I want to place myself at your side in the effort to overthrow a great injustice, which in both the human thought of Socrates and the strictly material ideology of Marx, wounds him who produces it more than him who suffers it.

San Jose, Costa Rica. JUAN MARINELLO.

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American Caravanserai

American Caravan IV, edited by Alfred Kreymborg, Lewis Mumford and Paul Rosenfeld. New York: The Macaulay Company. 579 pages. $5.

WITH SO little concern for their more personal preferences that one accepts their good faith even when he cannot quite grasp the principles by which they are guided, the editors of "The American Caravan" continue their exploration of the less adequately charted paths in contemporary literature. Despite the inclusion in each volume of work by established writers, the emphasis is unmistakably and increasingly upon the efforts of the younger, less known and more venturesome authors. For the most part, the sources of "Caravan" material are those areas of literary activity that nourish the journals of experiment: Transition, Blues, Pagany, The Hound and Horn, Morada and similar quarterlies and monthlies still with us or lately deceased. But these contributions appear to better advantage here than in their native haunts, if only because the "Caravan" editors are less doctrinaire and less eager to *épater les bourgeois,* more rigorously selective and more sensitive to all the aspects of artistic excellence, than the editors of most of the little reviews. To examine in great quantities the work of younger men and women, no matter how unprecedented or how uninviting it may seem; to select therefrom, with balanced concern for excellence, representativeness and promise, a few notable specimens; and to present these specimens to an audience more or less honestly interested in American literature, but usually too hurried to read and pass judgment upon the organs of experiment—that is the task, surprisingly well performed, of the editors of the "Caravan."

In its broader outlines the fourth "American Caravan" is much like the third. Like the third, it shows that the editors' conception of their task has grown increasingly concrete, that a clearer realization of the volume's limitations and needs is growing up among its potential contributors. Moreover, there is a rough formula that will fit the fourth as well as the third issue: from fifteen to twenty short stories, most of them good; seventy-five to one hundred pages of irritatingly uneven poetry; one somewhat unsatisfactory play; one long piece of prose, almost inexplicably included; and some excellent criticism.

Three of the contributions may be briefly dismissed. Virgil Geddes' "The Stable and the Grove," a tragedy of sexual frustration in Nebraska, has its finer passages, but the uncertainty of the tone, wavering between a slightly amateurish starkness and a pretentious ornamentation, reduces the enthusiasm of the reader. Yet the play was worth printing—which is more than can be said of Herbert Bernstein's scenario, "The Apostate." Almost devoid of literary interest, only mildly novel and provocative in its demands upon the camera, both unoriginal and unsound in its underlying ideas, this piece deflates any hope that the moving picture might stimulate literary activity and confirms the impression that any fruitful influence of the cinema on other arts must be indirect. Less easily disposed of, because of the kind of awe it inspires in the reader, is George Whitsett's short novel, "The Wood of Hortense"; but it is, for all its ingenuity, a monstrosity. There is no limit to the number of games that can be played with words, and this particular game, which involves the expression of the obscure, allusive, personal and parabolic method of the Transition school in a language of the most offensive preciosity, is rather duller than most.

All the other contributions, with the exception of a few poems, are worth more attention than can possibly be given them. Of the stories by established writers, William Faulkner's "Ad Astra," a picture of the chaos and hysteria at the end of the War, is the most brilliant. Through this narrative of madness and debauchery run the reflections of the Hindu subadar, and against the background of disintegration stands the solidly rooted figure of the German prisoner, completing the picture of the lost generation. Of the authors first brought to general attention by the "Caravan," Joseph Vogel is, unless one regards Jonathan Leonard as a "Caravan" discovery, at this point the most promising. More than Robert Cantwell, S. Guy Endore or Joseph Mitchell, he grows in strength, perfecting his skill and intensifying his knowledge of his material. Next to him, Phillip Stevenson, whose "Civilization" is imperfectly fused but delicately perceptive, calls for praise. Of the new contributors at least five deserve mention: Doris Peel and Harry Kapustin for their adroit and persuasive, though somewhat conventional, character studies; Albert Halper for his rendering of inarticulate persons and difficult moods; Hazel Hawthorne for her development of character and situation through brief episodes; and Paul Rosenfeld, the only editor represented in this volume, for the distinction of style and the impressiveness of detail in "The Dark Brown Room."

As usual, the poetry is a little saddening, for here the editors' sacrifice of their own tastes to the duty of being broad-minded passes the limits of wisdom. Yet Russell Davenport's "The California Spring" is a vigorous and original piece of writing, nicely balancing objective description with emotional sensitivity, and Abraham Klein's "Designs for Medieval Tapestry" is both a collection of shrewd character sketches and an ingenious experiment in *terza rima.* Phelps Putnam, appearing for the third time, is, as before, subtle and bold. John Wheelwright's "Come Over and Help Us," though its intellectual basis is dubious, makes, with its resounding invective, a grand poem to be roared out in moments of intoxication. Cary Ross weaves his way with growing confidence through his complexities and obscurities. And one could go on, saying moderately pleasant things about most of the poets represented; but the total effect of the poetry in the "Caravan" makes for even less optimism than is produced by reading the volumes of poetry published in the last year.

On the other hand, the critical essays are, also as usual, full of meat. Neither Fletcher nor Nuhn delves so persistently or so fundamentally as Yvor Winters did in his essay last year; but both of them, though Fletcher more notably, contrive to put students of literature in their debt. Fletcher's conception of poetry as the central art, midway between the spatial or plastic and the temporal or dynamic arts, and his defense of Imagism as an unbalanced but necessary preoccupation with the plastic side of poetry, clarify the present situation and seem to point toward basic esthetic principles. Unfortunately the third section of his essay, in which he rejects dualism and describes personality as the link between matter and spirit, closes abruptly without the definitions and explanations that might clinch his argument. Ferner Nuhn, writing with admirable warmth, calls for more attention to be paid to the non-negotiable elements in art. Though he more or less deliberately misunderstands those critics who maintain the importance of the social milieu to the artist, with the result that his man of straw is easily battered, there is enough truth in his case to justify the degree of exaggeration in which he indulges.

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On the whole this "Caravan" less easily lends itself to generalization than the preceding volume. In the third "Caravan" one note was struck enough times to warrant a certain amount of discussion of the hard-boiled, objective, self-consciously uncivilized approach to literature. Neither that theme nor any other here repeats itself so noticeably. Some of the new barbarians are represented, but, unfortunately for critical theorizing, Robert Cantwell's "Never Mind" and Guy Endore's "A Christmas Story," like Gerald Sykes's "Apology for My Health" in the summer Hound and Horn, make one wonder if the new barbarians may not turn out to be the new sentimentalists. A second contemporary tendency that makes itself felt, in the contributions of Robert Coates, Sherry Mangan and Vincent McHugh, is the revolution of the word, loosed on the world at large by the demise of Transition. A third is the so-called cult of simplicity, effectively represented by Albert Halper's "White Laughter." A fourth is the new regionalism, exemplified in Robert Warren's fine story of a tobacco grower. But these phrases, which are certainly not altogether meaningless when applied to the contemporary literary situation as a whole, have but slight value in any consideration of "American Caravan IV." The only obvious conclusion to be drawn from the volume is that there are in America a considerable number of not untalented young men and women who are doing interesting work in many different forms, with many different purposes and dogmas, and according to many different methods.

One other generalization, of a somewhat different kind, may be made: story after story deals with frustration, maladjustment or disintegration; several of the poems express disgust or defeat. It is the old, old story in American literature. A smudgy discontent, seldom breaking into the clean blaze of tragedy, fills our literary life. We try to lift ourselves by our bootstraps from this slough of despond: we try barbarism and super-sophistication, paganism and religion, the emotions and the reason, appeals to the individual and appeals to organized society. And all with the same result. Can we much longer disagree with those diagnosticians who regard our literature as the literature of a sick society, in which the few apparently healthy individuals have bought their health at a great price? If so, there can be no complaint against the artists; in reflecting our disease, they are merely performing their function. Whether anything can be done about the disease is a different matter.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

The British in East Africa

Africa View, by Julian Huxley. New York: Harper and Brothers. 478 pages. $5.

THIS VOLUME, which modestly poses as a travel book, is remarkable for the wide range of subjects which it covers, for the shrewdness and imagination shown in the author's observations, and for the charm of its style. Mr. Huxley, who is technically a biologist, went to East Africa in the fall of 1929 at the request of an advisory committee of the Colonial Office, to report on certain aspects of native education. His present observations, however, are by no means confined to the principles of pedagogy. He is at home in the field of political science and in that of anthropology (where the only mistake I have noticed is his failure to except the Vai tribe of West Africa from the generalization that no African people has produced a written language). He is as much interested in fiddler crabs and in the genesis of the Rift Valley as he is in native courts or General Smuts's theories of white civilization. His book is a forceful reminder to students of political science that government is often a matter of biology:

> In Africa this need for biological knowledge thrusts itself forcibly upon one. . . . Here, for instance, is an area as big as Great Britain which is closed to human settlement because the tsetse flies kill all the cattle; here is another, not quite so big, but big enough, in which other tsetse flies are giving sleeping sickness to human beings. Some of the best grazing country is unavailable because of ticks which spread deadly disease. Without a knowledge of these creatures' life-history and habits you will never be able to throw open these areas.

He also points out how necessary a knowledge of social anthropology is to successful colonial rule. The Kikuyus of Kenya have a custom of female circumcision which is both cruel and dangerous. But when missionaries recently attempted to compel native Christians to abandon the custom, the Kikuyu reserve was thrown into an uproar, one missionary being killed. It is dangerous for foreigners, says Mr. Huxley, to attempt suddenly to alter native customs, however crude these may be, "because they so often turn out to be part of the warp and woof of the native social structure."

Far from indulging in the cheap diatribes of many travelers, Mr. Huxley has written an unusually fair and sympathetic appraisal of the good and evil which have come from Christian missionary enterprise. In matters of native administration, he believes in the principle of encouraging the development of native institutions—called Indirect Rule—and he is opposed to the detribalization which has resulted from overhasty European penetration: "The most important lesson of history for Africa is to go slowly." The later chapters of the book discuss the innate capacity of the African and outline a model native policy, particularly in regard to land, labor, self-government, taxation and education.

For all the virtues of "Africa View," it suffers from two limitations. First, the author visited only British East Africa. Had he gone to the west coast and to the French territories, many of his contrasts would have been more clearly drawn; and in particular his observations concerning the capacity of the African might have been more conclusive. In the second place, the book does not adequately visualize the present clash of racial interests in East Africa, as among European, native and Indian. Mr. Huxley pays a tribute to British rule by declaring, "The traveler in Africa, without indulging either the false sentimentality of jingo imperialism or the false shame of doctrinaire little-Englandism, can simply feel proud of belonging to a nation which does a difficult job, demanding unselfish devotion, honesty and hard work, and does it on the whole so well." Applied to British administrators, in their routine work as individuals, this tribute is well deserved. But applied to the principles of British rule in the Kenya in the past, the statement is wholly misleading. Next to India, the racial problem in East Africa is the most serious confronting the British Empire at the present time. Mr. Huxley lays down many maxims concerning Trusteeship, much in the manner of Mill's essay on "Liberty"; but he does little to make his readers aware of the urgent importance of applying these maxims, if the whole of East Africa is to be saved.

RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL.

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Youth in Korea

The Grass Roof, by Younghill Kang. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.

A FEW THREADS on a map—the consciousness of a few hundred named people in palaces among anonymous millions outside—such is too often the record of a people as given us by history.

Reading this book by Younghill Kang, I realized not only how thin and insufficient, but, through its insufficiency, how false a picture of Kang's country, Korea, history had left in my mind. The historians had never let their eyes wander from the affairs of a not very important family (though it was royal) in Seoul, and had taken the palace squabbles to be the condition of the whole country. The Japanese invasion was interpreted as a sort of drastic but necessary medical treatment. And since, by the standards of the power obsession inevitably produced in us by traditional history, a nation that lets itself be overrun condemns itself, there had been no incentive to see it differently. In his account of Japanese-Korean relations, Brinkley names each Japanese measure a "reform," and the Korean rebels who, if they had been successful, would have been called "patriots," he calls "fanatics."

The first few pages of Mr. Kang's autobiographical novel turn this "historical" impression into an indecent absurdity. The book lets us see a life which was happy, peaceful and well ordered without the help of a modern army; which had refinement and dignity without a theistic religion, and a social ideal of perfection based on an intrinsic value, on scholarship, rather than on externalities like force and wealth. It is a common mistake to think of Far Eastern life as decadent merely because it has been static; usually it has been static for the very good reason that it has continually, and apparently fully, satisfied sensitive and keen-minded peoples for thousands of years.

The first part of the book is the story of Kang's childhood in his northern mountain village. As the inheritor of a noble family tradition—several members of the family held high scholarly rank—and as a leader in his age group, Kang led a busy and a happy life. His father was not rich, having too many dependent poets in his household not to feel poverty in times of drought or flood. But on the whole, life was pleasant. The darkest shadow was the presence of the Japanese, already in the land on pretexts familiar to anyone acquainted with the apologetics of imperialism.

Then occurs the black day of the Japanese annexation, with its afterdays of imprisonments and torture and the dismal, slow disintegration of the old civilization, begun by the Japanese and continued by the more effective solvents of industrial civilization. The old civilization had had unity; the new civilization, crude and still unintegrated in the West, was cruder still in the East; one almost feels life in Korea becoming brutishly young again, beginning to recivilize itself after the new pattern, to take who knows how many centuries or ages to achieve a harmony like the old.

In the midst of these events, Kang had his development. By the family tradition he was destined to be a great scholar, and under the teachings of the famous scholars in his family he absorbed so much of the ancient learning while still a child that the schools he was later sent to had little to teach him. The passion for learning was so ingrained in him that, when events made the old learning appear futile, he studied the new learning in secret and ran away from home to complete it. With interludes of revolutionary activity he stubbornly followed his quest for the new learning; the quest led him to Japan; and finally, after some grotesque misadventures, to America. It is too much to expect that America has satisfied him.

Mr. Kang's book is a stirring one. It is ardent; it is full of energy; it has humor; and there is poetry in the prose, besides the outright translations of Korean and Chinese poetry scattered through the text. Mr. Kang is so natural a writer that his occasional misuse of English words sometimes gives them a fresh flavor. Its own individual quality would have made the story impressive, even if it were an account of life nearer and more familiar to us. As almost the only book to introduce us to a virtually unknown people, it has also a high extrinsic importance. Reservations may be made; episodes are sometimes sentimentalized, as in the attempted suicide; or overdone, as in Princess Immortality; the estimates of the Japanese character proceed from obvious prejudice; and I cannot be reconciled to the use of the word "sans" in English translations of Oriental poetry; but these are minor blemishes. "The Grass Roof" is an interesting, an important and a memorable book.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Pilgrims of Freedom

Pilgrims of '48, by Josephine Goldmark. New Haven: Yale University Press. 311 pages. $4.

IN THE PREFACE to this book I have explained why I deem it to be a good and useful work. I should like to add here a few words to my judgment. The story Miss Josephine Goldmark tells is that of a group of "pilgrims" who came to America about two hundred and twenty years after the first pilgrims had come to the shores of Massachusetts Bay. Like the Puritans before them, the "'48ers" were distinguished from other immigrants in one important particular. They came primarily for freedom's sake. This is the perfect truth.

This small group of men and women, though all suffering from the depression in trade following the restoration of absolutism in the Austrian monarchy, did not emigrate because they strove for wealth. They could easily have struggled on at home, as their kith and kin did in the better times that came after the introduction of a constitutional government in Austria during the years from 1861 to 1867. Yet they felt this: they desired to leave in order to make it possible for them to realize their ideals of personal and political liberty, freedom of thought and social justice. They belonged to the generation of German Jews who had accepted the call toward emancipation from the fetters of medieval Judaism, centered, if anywhere, in that curious, many-centuries-old ghetto of Prague, which preserved an enormous amount of intellectual power for the most part lying idle. Emancipation still meant to them adherence to that new gospel of philosophy and art heralded in Germany by G. E. Lessing, and reaching its zenith in Kant and Schiller and Goethe. Those sons and daughters of the Wehle, Brandeis and Goldmark families were fervent disciples of German classical literature and thought. They all felt that they had to take their full share of the sacred burden laid upon them by the great turn in the fate of their ancient race and its culture. How the brothers and sisters of our '48ers have fulfilled their task in the old home is appreciated fully by any unbiased student of the history of political, legal and cultural progress in the old lands under

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the dominion of the Habsburgs. When Dr. Joseph Goldmark fled, first into Switzerland, later to America, after the crushing of the Austrian Parliament in 1849, he was one of the rising lights in the young School of Chemistry in Vienna. When he visited the old capital in 1868 to prove his innocence of the political crime for which the Viennese court martial had condemned him nineteen years earlier as an absentee, he found that his younger brother Karl Goldmark had become one of the acknowledged leaders of music in that classical school of musical composition developed during the nineteenth century in Vienna. How these sons and daughters of the Austrian '48ers have maintained in their new home in the United States both the deeply rooted ideals of their fathers and mothers, and the intellectual and moral energy of their old ancestors, is best shown by the life and work of the author of this book, Miss Josephine Goldmark, and by the achievements of Louis D. Brandeis. Both are the most admirable and praiseworthy scions of those pilgrims who emigrated to America for their love of freedom, progress of mankind and social justice.

JOSEF REDLICH.

That Dream of Debs

The General Strike: A Study of Labor's Tragic Weapon in Theory and Practice, by Wilfrid Harris Crook. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 649 pages. $6.

YEARS ago, Jack London wrote an essay entitled "The Dream of Debs." It is the autobiographical sketch of a wealthy man who, it seems, has been awakened an hour earlier than usual by the great silence that has befallen his city. The disturbing quietness turns out to be the ominous sign of a general strike which has halted the country's activities and threatens the provisioning of the cities. As the dream evolves, we see organized labor well supplied with food. "For weeks and months, craftily and secretly, the whole working class had been laying in private stocks of provisions." On the other hand, the wealthy classes and the slum dwellers starve. Finally, the employers surrender and organized labor wins the "closed shop." The general strike has been successful.

This vision made a tremendous appeal in its time. Today we are poignantly aware of London's oversimplification of social, economic and political processes, of his naïve faith in the efficacy of the workers' simply folding their arms in order to attain their desires. We know better now from the experience of wage earners in many countries. A book like "The General Strike" helps us to make our judgment on scientific grounds.

This study by Professor Crook of Bowdoin is the only treatise in English that covers the subject comprehensively; it contains an invaluable bibliography; and it is, moreover, written to hold the reader's interest. The author defines the general strike as a strike of the majority of the workers in the more important industries of any one locality or region. He distinguishes three types: first, the political, which aims to wrest concessions from the government (examples being the Belgian strike for universal suffrage and that against the Kapp Putsch in 1920 to save the German Republic); second, the economic, directed against the employers, like that of 1909 in Sweden and the Seattle strike in 1919; third, the revolutionary, which aims to overthrow the political or economic system, as did the Russian strike of 1905. Professor Crook does not classify his material under these three heads. Instead, he gives a historical treatment of the general strikes conducted in Great Britain, France, Belgium, Sweden, Holland, Russia, Spain, Italy, Germany, Seattle, Winnipeg, China, Vienna, and adds to this a chapter on the theoretical expositions of the general strike in the pre-war period.

On the basis of these investigations of actual situations, the author might have gone on to state a theory of the general strike, but this is a task which he has left to future students. In his introduction, he offers a few of his own conclusions—as, for example, that the general strike has frequently been ill prepared and therefore destined to failure; that the immediate aim has usually been one of protest; and that the appearance of citizens' defense organizations makes "the ultimate possibility of success for labor in any future general strike . . . progressively fainter, unless the brutal logic of revolution is faced." There is, however, no final chapter of comparisons and generalizations to supplement the bird's-eye view of the introduction. Professor Crook has written a scientific case-book, but to arrive at a science of the general strike, the reader must essay the task of criticism for himself.

LOUIS STANLEY.

Book Notes

BELLES LETTRES

AFTER TWO THOUSAND YEARS, by G. Lowes Dickinson. *New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 213 pages. $2.*

Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson, most admirable and felicitous writer of dialogues, resurrects Plato and joins him in discussion with a Modern Young Man over the state of modern society. The result fulfills a double purpose: it presents Mr. Dickinson's criticisms and modifications of Plato's doctrines—including the thought that the Highest Goods, attainable only by a minority, should perhaps be sacrificed to the distribution of lower goods to the greatest number—and it redefines the early positions established in Mr. Dickinson's own dialogues, "A Modern Symposium" and "Justice and Liberty." Like Plato in "The Laws," Mr. Dickinson stoops a little more willingly to the commonplace in the latest of his dialogues; but his arguments have their pristine virtues of clarity and rationality. This is the traditional Platonic humanism that the English have made their own, almost at its best—dispassionate, suave, enlightened, elegant, noble—but with that muffled sense of the world's reality that characterizes even the best of cloisters.

A CHILD'S REMINISCENCES, by Walt Whitman. *Edited by Glenn Hughes. Seattle: University of Washington Book Store. 44 pages. $5.*

A Whitman item which includes the first printed version of "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," as well as press notices and blurbs about "Leaves of Grass" written by Whitman himself. It is the first of a series of handsomely printed folios to be issued under the general editorship of Glenn Hughes.

BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A PHILOSOPHER, by George Herbert Palmer. *Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 138 pages. $2.*

This charming discourse of a man now nearly ninety years old, upon himself, and the philosophic tempers he has seen rage and quiet during his years in the department of Philosophy at Harvard, and the virtues of long and short sentences for a distinctive style, and the nature of Jesus, first appeared in Volume I of "Contemporary American Philosophy." Its pleasant, even-tempered exposition and reflection, its curious but proper modesty, make it well worth republishing in a separate volume.

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THE LETTERS OF JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY, edited by William Lyon Phelps. *Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 349 pages. $5.*

The majority of these letters, selected from the far larger number written or received by Riley after his twenty-seventh birthday, are here published for the first time. They furnish the best possible description of the man: his genial homespun wit, his exuberance, his sentimentality. They reveal, perhaps even more clearly than his poems, his limitations as a poet: his uncritical acceptance of the American scene, his refusal—as indicated in his attitude toward Poe, Whitman or Bierce—to countenance anything more substantial than a conventionalized "good cheer." Professor Phelps, who was for twenty years the friend of Riley, has written a foreword and an afterword which, though lacking in critical detachment, supply pertinent information on the poet's life.

THEATRE STREET: The Reminiscences of Tamara Karsavina, with a foreword by J. M. Barrie. *New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 341 pages. $5.*

In a charming but at times confusing manner, Tamara Karsavina recounts her experiences as a dancer, from the time she entered ballet school until she fled with her husband out of the Russian Revolution to England. The familiar and great personages of the ballet, Diaghileff, Fokine, Nijinsky, with the lesser figures, move in and out of her narrative, beclouded, oddly, by the simplicity with which Karsavina writes; at times one wishes she had as many firm things to say about these people as she has about Isadora Duncan's theories of the dance. The book has a glamor that comes, perhaps, from the now-removed glory of the Russian ballet.

History

AFTER ROBESPIERRE: The Thermidorean Reaction, by Albert Mathiez. *Translated by Catherine Alison Phillips. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 274 pages. $5.*

The overthrow of Robespierre on the Ninth Thermidor brought to an end the tragedy of heroes and ushered in the picaresque drama of knaves and scoundrels. This latter drama, the Thermidorean reaction, though it lasted only fifteen months, is the most depressing period in the French Revolution. A majority of the historians, including Professor Mathiez himself, have generally been loath to treat the period at all. To fill in this gap Professor Mathiez has written the present volume, rather from a feeling of duty than from any sympathy or love for the subject. However, he describes the events in great detail and with his unerring sense of value. It is not a book for the general reader, but to those who are interested in the French Revolution or in the spectacle of idealism defiled and eventually destroyed by the lowest type of cunning and political intrigue, the work is invaluable. The translation is an expert piece of work.

THE HISTORY OF THE MAYA, from the Earliest Times to the Present Day, by Thomas Gann and Eric Thompson. *New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 274 pages. $2.50.*

Dr. Gann was in charge of the recent expedition of the British Museum to Central America. Dr. Thompson is assistant curator of the Field Museum in Chicago. Their book divides itself into a chronological record of the establishment of the known sites of Mayan civilization and an ethnological study of the life of the surviving Mayan communities. Neither of the two is a very skillful writer; and although their "History of the Maya" is useful as a text and reference book, it is unprepossessing for general reading.

PURITAN'S PROGRESS, by Arthur Train. *New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 477 pages. $3.50.*

Following the course of his ancestors, who settled in Massachusetts in 1635, Mr. Arthur Train has written a vivacious comment on American social history from that day to the present. He has drawn materials from family and public records, newspapers, contemporary accounts such as Philip Hone's diary, compilations such as Mrs. Earle's "Sabbath in Puritan New England," and realistic histories such as Mr. Seitz's "Dreadful Decade," weaving them all into an irregular but highly colored pattern. In conclusion he discusses the illusion that "former days were better than these." His dithyramb on our present advantages is as eloquent as Macaulay's, and his respect for our business and industrial civilization as sincere. He shows that the energy with which the Puritan attended to his religious concerns is now diverted to business, and that the fundamental American seriousness of purpose remains the same. Mr. Train's book is a cocktail, or rather a highball, in these days of gloom and depression. He is an optimist and an activist. His motto might be that of the little Puritan girl's sampler—was she one of Mr. Train's ancestresses?—"Hope on, hop ever."

Fiction

THE WHITE PATERNOSTER, by T. F. Powys. *New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.*

In a collection of uneven stories about the curious world of an English shire, there are a few of extraordinary merit. "The Hunted Beast," an excellently contrived and well written piece, is undoubtedly the finest of the list. Inauspiciously the volume opens with the title story, in which, as in some of the others, the dialect clouds issues to no particular purpose. The manner of writing, induced by the eccentricities of the characters, is occasionally the manner of patronage; but "What Lack I Yet" and "Old Men" are stories of distinction. The peculiar humors, the raciness, are enough to keep the whole volume well above the level of dullness.

Contributors

J. Russell Smith has been professor of Economic Geography at Columbia University since 1919. He has done geographical field work in Asia and made agricultural investigations in North Africa and southern Europe. His latest book, "North America," is an economic geography which explains the continent in its capacities as the home of man.

John Dos Passos is the author of a volume of poetry, a book of travel, two plays and several novels, the most recent being "The 42nd Parallel." He was an active member of the New Playwrights' group, which produced his play "Airways, Inc." At present he is touring through Mexico.

Yvor Winters is an instructor in English at Stanford University. "The Proof," his latest volume of poetry, was published last fall by Coward McCann.

John Peale Bishop, formerly an editor of Vanity Fair, has been living abroad for the last few years. He recently won the long short-story contest conducted by Scribner's Magazine with his "Many Thousands Gone," which will be published in book form this spring.

E. B. White is on the editorial staff of The New Yorker, contributing under the initials of E. B. W. He has written a volume of verse, "The Lady Is Cold," and is, with James Thurber, the co-author of "Is Sex Necessary?"—somewhere described as a monograph on cryptogamic endocrinology.

Granville Hicks, who is an assistant professor of English at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, is a frequent contributor to The Nation and The Hound and Horn. He has written a series of three articles on the relation of the modern American novel to industrial civilization, which will be published in The New Republic.

Raymond Leslie Buell is research director of the Foreign Policy Association and author, among other volumes, of "The Native Problem in Africa," the result of his investigations of political conditions in that continent.

Isidor Schneider is a novelist, critic and poet. Four of his more recent poems are published in the current edition of "The American Caravan." For many years he has made a study of Chinese history and literature.

Josef Redlich is professor of Comparative Public Law at Harvard University. He was formerly connected with the university of Vienna.

Louis Stanley is associate editor of The New Leader, an instructor in labor problems at the Rand School of Social Science and a writer on labor subjects for the liberal and labor press.

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